The Tammany Take – By George Creel

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Collier's

February 18, 1933

THE NAT[illegible]EEKLY

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Collier's

THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

Next Week

PERHAPS you would like to get away from winter for a while. A change of scene will do you good—a complete change. We suggest the island of Formosa, off the China coast.

Of course you will have to put up with minor discomforts — head-hunters, for instance—but that's part of the change. And we can offer you a little romance to repay you for the trip.

Do you see that temple full of sinister-looking individuals armed with knives? Well, there are two Americans in there who have found out more than is safe for them about head-hunters. Those perturbed and anxious natives are getting ready to do something about it—with their knives.

And all because Nora Ridgeway thought Formosa was safe and dull. We believe you'll enjoy your excursion "On Paradise Street" with Sidney Herschel Small.

IN 1908 Winston Churchill inaugurated the British system of unemployment insurance. It was started in a small way and has grown tremendously since then. Today it constitutes the most extensive and prolonged attempt anywhere in the world to deal with unemployment.

With this experience of Great Britain's as a background, Mr. Churchill examines the American problem of unemployment. His brilliant and informative article is called "Who'll Pay the Jobless?"

"IF YOU meet a girl you think you might like," Marilyn said to Bill, "you just tell yourself how sad it is about you. When you meet someone you really want you'll do something about it—start a war or blow a safe or be a movie star."

Those are harsh words. But Marilyn had no intention of making Bill start a war all by himself. She was ready to lend a helping hand, as Dwight Mitchell Wiley relates in "The Life Guard's Bride."

WE HAVE been a good deal disturbed about Technocracy recently. It tended to get into our hair and ears and make conversation difficult. And so we were overjoyed when H. I. Phillips dropped in to set us right about it. He does the same service for you in "Technocracy Made Simple," an article that is completely non-technical and simple to the *n*th degree.

TERESA HYDE PHILLIPS, Ernest Haycox, John B. Kennedy, Marie Beynon Ray, William G. Shepherd and Don Marquis bring you varied and delicious fare. E. Phillips Oppenheim and George Agnew Chamberlain continue their brilliant performances. And only a week to wait.

This Week

February 18, 1933

GEORGE CREEL
The Tammany Take. Municipal graft—where it comes from and what it amounts to. Page 7

ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE
You Can't Marry Two Men. But when you can't make up your mind, what *can* you do? Page 9

DON MARQUIS
Steeled for Prosperity. The Old Soak is worried, but prepared to be brave. Page 11

HERBERT RAVENEL SASS
In the Viceroy's Villa. The flash of swords and the flame of love on the Spanish Main. Page 12

ROARK BRADFORD
War Baby's Mamma. Skullduggery and hilarity on Little Bee Bend Plantation. Page 14

GEORGE AGNEW CHAMBERLAIN
Amateur Bride, Part IX. An auction in the Dos Picos bar—with souls at stake. Page 16

OWEN P. WHITE
Talking Boy. Tom Horn, a great Indian fighter. Page 18

THE SHORT SHORT STORY
One Man's Taste, by Richard Connell. Page 19

HUGH MacNAIR KAHLER
She Warned Him First. A sparkling love story. Page 20

E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM
Gallows of Chance, Part VII. Scotland Yard closes in. Page 22

CLINTON W. GILBERT
Contact Man. Between our next President and our next Congress—Mr. Garner. Page 25

HENRY F. PRINGLE
Words and Music. The blithe career of Rodgers and Hart. Page 28

FRELING FOSTER
Keep Up with the World. Your duty made easy. Page 40

EDITORIAL
The Tariff's Country Cousin. Page 50

Any Week

A WORD or two from Miss Hazel Benson of Chevy Chase, Maryland, about Betty Thornley Stuart's "I Remember Your Face." Wrong is Miss Stuart, says Miss Benson, when she writes that "an olive skin means the sort of skin one sees on an olive and that olive means green. Olive," goes on Miss Benson with some heat, "refers to the leaves of the tree, which are cream with a greenish cast—drab. Only unripe olives are green. Has Miss Stuart ever seen a ripe olive?" We suspect that Miss Stuart has, but we don't like to ask her.

NOW, here's something that warms us: Mr. M. S. Kelley of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, has decided that our national "trouble is that we brag too much. Four years ago we bragged about our profits. Now we brag about our losses, thinking it smart to boast that we haven't bought a new suit or dress or car in two or three years." Mr. Kelley thinks it would help a lot if we'd just stop bragging.

BUT Mr. James W. Traer of Independence, Kansas, reports that he detects sentiment favoring "returning the country to the Indians, if they will take it now that we've ruined it, because they managed a nice living out of it." Mr. Traer also reports that Mrs. Traer thinks our Mr. John T. Flynn a Technocrat. Mr. Flynn says he isn't. It's getting to be a fighting word.

SIMPLICITY, directness and clarity—these are the glittering triumvirate of good writing. And here's what we mean, from the smoking pen of Dr. Fred F. Moore of Glendale, California. Says he: "I had not the slightest idea that anyone could be so damned dumb and plain ignorant of the money question as you." That's all. No foolishness. Impossible to misunderstand. And leaving us with nothing to do but hope fervently that it isn't true.

"AS I GET it," writes Mr. Peter Losee of Utica, New York, "everything would be okay if we would cancel those war debts. Logically, things should be better if only part of our debtors paid. Well, some of them didn't and where are we? Therefore when none of them do, prosperity will have fought her way around the well-known corner of Hoover and Mellon Streets. It won't be long now, so cheer up."

EVERY day for two weeks now we have been receiving post cards, unsigned, bearing the legend: "The Real Instigators of Warfare Are Never Found in the Front-Line Trenches." Not that we'd think of contradicting, but we wish the sender would go haunt somebody else for a while.

WE WONDER what has become of the party who sent us fifteen cards in fifteen days all bearing one simple question: "Well, What Are You Going to Do About It?" Or the sender of those twelve cards notifying us that "You're Next!" We never know whether to be apprehensive or amused and that's no way to be.

GLAD there's no law compelling us to answer all questions. Mr. Melvin DeGroote of St. Louis, Missouri, catches us saying that "More persons throughout the world are engaged in the planting and harvesting of wheat than in any other paying occupation." And Mr. DeGroote wants to know where the paymaster's window is.

AND Mr. Adam G. Benn of Allentown, Pennsylvania, wants it understood that he objects to having his taxes contribute to the salaries of "senators who willfully prevent legislation from coming to a vote by filibusters or other obstructing tactics, and representatives who haven't sense enough to see that even the Anti-Saloon League would be financially better off if we repealed the Eighteenth Amendment."

WE WERE all set for this one. We've been wondering why people have overlooked it this long. Mr. D. Reid of Montreal, Canada, wants to know why, in all this war debt sound and fury, some of our states overlook the fact that after the Civil War they repudiated $300,000,000 they owed England. The states are Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia. Mr. Reid lives at 5008 Seventh Avenue, Rosemont, Montreal. And he loves to read letters.

AND as a last word we wish to inform you that this column will contain no predictions from anyone that under Technocracy life will be sustained with hard-boiled ergs. Nor that electric dollars will come as a great shock to us.

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Miracle Worker, AGE 8

His little hands hold the instrument tightly; his small, confident voice speaks eagerly into the mouthpiece. And as simply as that, he talks to his friend who lives around the corner, or to his Granny in a distant city . . . achievements which, not so many years ago, would have seemed miraculous.

These miracles he takes as a matter of course, in the stride of his carefree days. You yourself probably accept the telephone just as casually. Seldom do you realize what extraordinary powers it gives you. You use it daily for a dozen different purposes. For friendly chats. For business calls. To save steps, time and trouble. To be many places, do many things, visit many people, without so much as moving from the living room of your home or the desk in your office.

At this very moment, somewhere, your voice would be the most welcome music in the world. Some one would find happiness in knowing where you are and how you are. Some one would say gratefully, sincerely—"I was wishing you'd call."

From more than seventeen million telephones in this country, the very one you want will be connected quickly and efficiently with the telephone in your home or office.

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To a Lady

[SOMEWHAT SKEPTICAL]

. . A Word About Coffee

You are asked to believe so many things, dear lady . . . Especially about coffee!

We know that you, of course, want coffee that is *fresh*. So, about our Maxwell House Coffee, we ask you to accept only this:

Any can of Maxwell House Coffee you buy is sure to be perfectly fresh—just as deliciously fresh as the very hour it was roasted . . . (about other coffees we have nothing to say).

We wish only to add: It is, therefore, quite impossible for any coffee to be fresher than Maxwell House.

It is air, you see, that causes coffee staleness. It is air, the very air you breathe, that robs coffee of its freshness . . . and turns delicate flavor oils rancid.

So in packing our Maxwell House Coffee we use a special method called the Vita-Fresh process (a process, incidentally, which we control). It eliminates air from inside the can . . . protects each pound of coffee against its flavor-destroying effects.

Thus our Vita-Fresh way of packing assures you roaster-fresh coffee—always. And certainly no coffee can be fresher than that!

We think you will enjoy this fine coffee that so pleased the epicures of the Old South years ago. It is exactly the same superb blend today . . . a blend the years have never matched for rich, mellow, full-bodied flavor.

Your grocer has it for you—*fresh* as the hour it was roasted. Why don't you try a can—today? It is a product of General Foods.

And by the way—do you own a radio? If you do, tune it in next Thursday evening on Captain Henry's Maxwell House Show Boat. One full hour of music and fun with real Show Boat atmosphere.

A-B-C's OF COFFEE FRESHNESS

[A] AIR is the destroyer of coffee freshness and flavor.

[B] Unless coffee is protected against AIR it becomes stale — quickly.

[C] Maxwell House Coffee is *completely* protected against AIR . . . you get it perfectly fresh — always!

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MAXWELL HOUSE

GOOD TO THE LAST DROP

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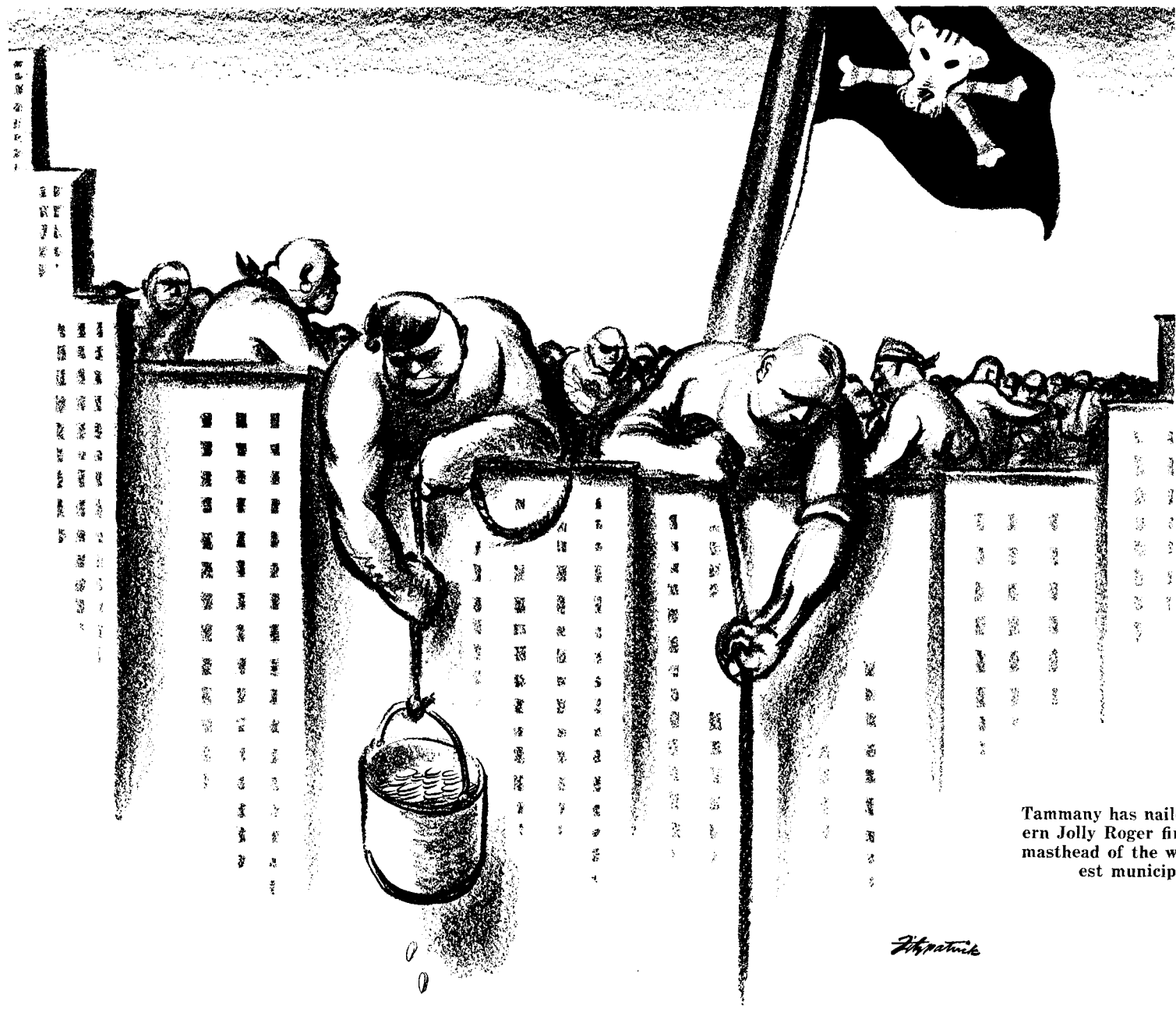

Tammany has nailed its modern Jolly Roger firmly to the masthead of the world's richest municipality

The Tammany Take

By George Creel

In earlier articles of this series Mr. Davenport has shown you how the chieftains of Tammany control the destinies of New York City and Mr. Kennedy has pictured the constant loving care with which Tammany maintains its hold upon the voters. Here Mr. Creel reveals the golden fruit of this monstrous and intricate growth—the spoils and "honest graft" for which the system exists and on which it flourishes

BOSS TWEED made it a habit to tap the till, robbing the treasury with both hands, and died in jail. Later masters of Tammany profited by the horrible example and conceived the idea of "honest graft," an indirect loot of the taxpayers' money even more profitable while carrying a minimum of risk. Working with the furious industry of beavers, the Wigwam has developed this pretty conceit to its ultimate, and were Tweed alive he would have to confess himself a piker and a sap.

As things stand today, there is no possible contact with any department of the government of the City of New York that does not exact tribute either in cold cash or political support. You pay as you enter and you pay as you leave. The sale of "influence" and "favors" has been systematized to a point where there is a price on everything. From the humble pushcart to the great department store, from the bootblack and petty gambler to corporation heads and millionaire builders, all have to "come through." Nothing, no matter how legitimate, goes free from handing toll to Tammany, and the illegitimate business pays an even higher price.

Whatever the city buys, whether a ream of paper or a school site, yields its "rake off;" the right to violate rules and regulations is sold over the counter; there is virtually a fixed scale of rates for lowering assessments and set sums for having an army of inspectors look the other way while contractors scamp the work. Tammany favorites sell life insurance, fire insurance, surety bonds, automobiles and electric light fixtures—almost everything but teddy bears—and woe to the foolish man who gives his business elsewhere.

Nothing is safer than the assertion that no city contract ever goes to any but the "right people." Specifications are drawn up in such manner that only favorites can meet them and there are scores of ways to get around the obstacle of sealed bids. In event of a slip-up, so that an outsider does get the award, dealing with him is simplicity itself. Inspectors will devil him night and day, delaying and rejecting, and if that method fails, his payments will be held up for some reason or another.

It is impossible to make any exact estimate of Tammany's annual "take." On the city's payroll, for instance, are about 148,000 of the faithful, drawing salaries to the amount of $365,534,288.87. All but the humbler positions are grossly overpaid and fully three fourths of the many "deputies'" and "chief clerks'" positions are simply sinecures created to take care of district leaders and such of their kin as look down on work.

As for the district leader, the lad who delivers the robot vote—and *counts* it—competent authorities figure his income at $100,000 a year, and there are twenty-three districts in Manhattan alone. These "earnings," however, are picayunish compared to the returns enjoyed by the Tammany "big shots" who handle the juicy deals such as assessments, condemnation proceedings, large contracts, pier leases, and cases involving important decisions by city boards.

Jim Butler, iron boss of St. Louis some thirty years ago, was swept from power by a tidal wave of indictments for having taken bribes. "Where I made my mistake," he cried in bitterness of spirit, "was in not bein' a lawyer and callin' 'em fees."

When it comes to real money, "fees" is the Tammany way. A lawyer will usually be found in every deal, cashing the check that comes to him and passing the money on to a secret principal after retaining his own modest bit. The work falls into two classes: "specialization" and "acceleration." The "specialist" deals in favors and concessions and the "accelerator" is skilled in the removal of obstacles.

When, for instance, it is decided to

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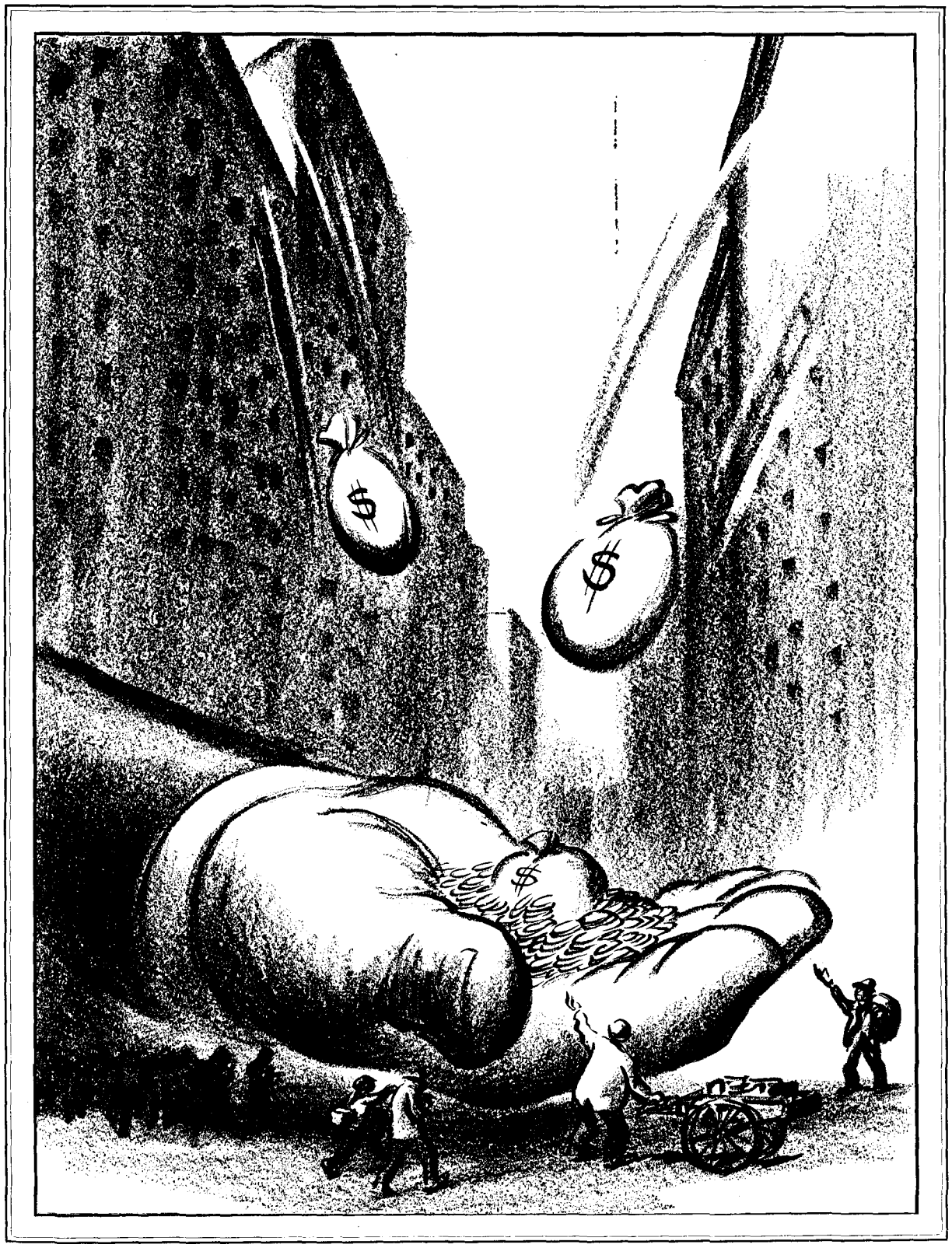
shake down some large job, inspectors rain from the skies and bubble up from the bowels of the earth. The boughs of trees break under their weight. The wise man quickly gets in touch with an "accelerator" and, as if by magic, his path is cleared of every difficulty. And is there money in it? Well, a president of the New York, New Haven and Hartford is on record with the admission that his road had to set aside $1,600,000 to "accelerate influence" in New York in connection with needed improvements.

Fortunes are the reward of Tammany leadership. Croker died a very rich man, and "Charlie" Murphy left an estate of $2,170,761. This, of course, represented only a small part of his "take," for Murphy, unlike his successors, cared little for money, giving with both hands. According to Tammany gossip, George W. Olvany's fall from power was largely due to an invincible thriftiness, and both Curry and McCooey have their first dollars still intact.



New York City pays an astounding tribute to its rapacious government

The Magic Tin Box

The Seabury investigation, unhappily, did not get at the bank accounts of Curry and McCooey, but did manage to obtain a peep at what Olvany put by against a rainy day. During his reign from 1925 to 1931, the judge's law firm banked the tidy sum of $5,283,000, yet even this was admittedly far from the true figure, for various payments did not pass through the account.

Few things are more mysterious than a Tammany bank book. For instance, Thomas M. Farley, first county clerk and then sheriff, received a total salary of $90,000 between 1925 and 1931, but managed to deposit $360,000, a difference of $270,000. Was he embarrassed when asked to explain where it came from? Not the least in the world.

"Well, that came from the good box I had," he replied to Judge Seabury's question.

"Kind of a magic box?" pursued Seabury.

"It was a wonderful box," said Mr. Farley.

Mayor Walker had an equally wonderful safe in one or the other of his homes, where he put the cash offerings of admirers. Into this safe went the $26,000 in bonds given to him by Broker Sisto, and much of the $246,000 contributed by Paul Block, who was moved to "make some money for Jimmie" when ten-year-old Billy Block burst into tears at thought of the mayor having to scrabble along on a beggarly $25,000 a year.

Another element of vagueness in connection with the Walker finances was introduced by Russell T. Sherwood, the most famous missing person since Charlie Ross. "Sherwood," according to Judge Seabury's official finding, "was the mayor's financial agent," and his bank and brokerage accounts "were really the conduits through which flowed the mayor's money." In five years the "flow" was almost a million dollars, of which $750,000 was in cash, and, declares Judge Seabury with grim finality, "substantially all of that money was the mayor's."

Charity That Began at Home

James A. McQuade, register of Kings County, deposited $520,000 in six years, although his salary only totaled $50,000, and gave as an explanation that the extra $470,000 represented borrowings to support "thirty-three McQuades." According to his testimony, he would "touch" A, then B to repay A, C to repay B, and so on to the end of the alphabet. Strangely enough, big-hearted Jim could remember the name of scarcely a single lender.

Even the "little fellows" experienced similar difficulty in explaining their bank accounts. Peter J. Curran, undersheriff and president of Farley's political club, banked $662,311 in seven years on a salary of $7,500 a year. Joseph Flaherty, another deputy sheriff, deposited $20,890 in four months although receiving only $2,700 a year. Just a lot of careless boys!

It is a sin and a shame to drag a modest, retiring man such as Judge Olvany out into the limelight and yet his secret practice furnishes the best illustration of the Tammany system, showing both the method and the rich returns. Let us first consider the Board of Standards and Appeals, which has large discretionary jurisdiction in giving exemptions from the municipal regulations that govern the height of buildings, zone restrictions, and the location of garages and gasoline stations.

Keeping this "discretionary jurisdiction" firmly in mind, we next come to Fred F. French, the master builder, who wants to put up a Fifth Avenue office building. All well and good, but Mr. French craves street walls that exceed the height limit imposed by law. Being "city broke," he goes at once to the firm of Olvany, Eisner and Donnelly, and engages these eminent lawyers to obtain the required concession. The Olvany firm shyly refuses to appear as attorneys of record, but suggests a Mr. Boyle. With an alacrity that delights Mr. French, the Board grants him his privilege, and he sends Mr. Boyle a check for $35,000. And what does Mr. Boyle do then? Generously, unselfishly, he hands the Olvany firm $25,000 in cash, gives a $5,000 check to the French interests and has $5,000 remaining.

Mr. French, coming to build Tudor City, is again in need of various exemptions both from the Board of Standards and Appeals and the Board of Estimate. Again he goes to the Olvany firm, and for a second time Judge Olvany, Mr. Eisner and Mr. Donnelly coyly conceal their connection, this time suggesting a lawyer by the name of Flynn. Five separate and distinct concessions are granted to Mr. French by the two boards, and Mr. Flynn, no less unselfish than Mr. Boyle, gives $75,000 to Judge Olvany's firm: $40,000 in cash, $10,000 in a cashier's check, and $25,000 in a check directly from French, for by the time of the last payment Judge Olvany had ceased to be the leader of Tammany.

When the Irving Trust Co. decided to put up a building at Number One Wall Street, certain exemptions had to be obtained from the Board of Standards and Appeals. No less wise than Mr. French, the company retained Olvany, Eisner and Donnelly, but with customary modesty, the judge's firm acted through a Mr. Rorke, graciously permitting him to receive all the credit. When it came to settling up, however, Mr. Rorke cashed the Irving Trust's check for $30,000 and gave $27,000 in currency to the Olvany firm.

The Board Sees the Light

As a further instance of Judge Olvany's rare legal ability, even when exerted through an intermediary, there is the case of the corporation that wanted to erect a block of office buildings on Madison Avenue in a residential zone. Olvany, Eisner and Donnelly were retained, and again Mr. Rorke appeared as attorney of record. As it so happened, the Board of Standards and Appeals had repeatedly refused similar permits, and had been sustained in these refusals by court decisions, but now there was frank admission that this previous attitude was based on grossest error. The Board, therefore, reversed itself without delay, and Mr.

(Continued on page 30)

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You Can't Marry Two Men

If a girl can love two suitors at the same time, Ruth Kerwin did. She had to choose between them and she did

By Arthur Somers Roche

FOR years, for as long, almost, as she could remember, Ruth Kerwin had known that some day she must come to a decision between Bill Henderson and Tom Blake. There had been times, in the years between her coming-out party and her twenty-second birthday, when she had hoped that some third cavalier would come riding out of somewhere, to take decision from her.

But no such masterful knight had appeared. Not that there hadn't been other suitors; there had been many of them. Once or twice her heart had skipped a beat. But an hour later it had resumed its regular pulsation. The new beau had been relegated to that filing-case wherein attractive girls put away the men who didn't quite make good.

Once she had even gone so far as to permit a certain debonair youth to embrace her; she had even given him her lips. And on the following afternoon, with that amazing frankness that was part of her, she made confession to Bill and Tom.

"There was a moon last night," she said.

"Bill," she cried, "where are you going?" "I'm getting out of here—before I slap your face," he said

Illustrated by Jay Hyde Barnum

"Don't I know?" groaned Bill. "Me stuck at the office getting eyestrain, trying to find some way for my client to get out of paying his bills. And that silly old moon grinning at me!"

"Ah-ha," chuckled Tom. "So the client can't pay his bills, eh? You'd better figure out how to get him to pay yours." He turned to Ruth. "You could be kinder, Ruth. You don't have to mention last night's moon, do you? There was I trying to convince my patient—"

It was Bill's turn to chuckle.

"If your patient gets well, and my client settles his bills, how will we kill the time until new victims appear?"

They both laughed. Lawyer Bill and Doctor Tom made light of their slow-to-start careers. Some day Bill would be on the Supreme Court and Tom would be the greatest throat man in the country. Meanwhile, each would try to worry along, Bill on his eighty thousand a year and Tom on his seventy-five.

"There was a moon last night," Ruth repeated.

Tom looked at Bill.

"There is a note of sadness in the lady's voice," he said. "She probably wants to confide in someone; preferably a physician. Women love to tell doctors all."

"You're nuts," jeered Bill. "Lawyers are the birds that get the confidences. If you'll just run along, Tom, old top—"

"Sam Jennings took me to look at the moon," Ruth interrupted. "He kissed me. I kissed him."

The two men looked at each other. They shook their heads solemnly.

"Can't decide between us, so she tries someone else," said Bill.

"As a doctor I prescribe an ocean voyage," said Tom. "Bermuda would be nice now. A quiet honeymoon with me—"

"I wish you boys would be serious," said Ruth. "You ought to be shocked, outraged, indignant."

Bill grinned.

"WE'VE done the same thing, Ruth, my love," he said. "There was that little widow at Santa Barbara. My spies report to me that Tom did an hour with her, while the mysterious Pacific—"

"And while we're on such pleasant subjects let's not forget the Bar Harbor lady. I mean the one that you took canoeing, Bill." Tom grinned derisively at the young lawyer. Then he smiled at Ruth.

"Well, about Sam Jennings and the cheery interchange of courtesies?"

She frowned in exasperation.

"No good. Sam is estimable, and I'm a little rotter to talk about it, but—no thrill, lads, no thrill."

"And there never will be, Ruth, until you stand in the moonlight with me," said Tom.

"Or with me," said Bill.

She knew that one of them spoke the truth, but which one? It seemed to her that there would never be any answer to that question.

If there were any choice between them! But there wasn't. Take such an elementary matter as good looks. Tom was just short of six feet and Bill was just over that height. Tom was blond, with the gayest blue eyes in the world. Bill was dark, solemn until he smiled, and then mischief radiated from him. They weighed within five pounds of each other. Bill was a crackerjack golfer; Tom played good tennis. Both danced beautifully.

They belonged to the same clubs, had

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gone to the same school and university, had been intimate friends all their lives. And since the day, fifteen years before, when she, at the pool at Green Point, had splashed her way into the hearts of the two twelve-year-old boys who had been practicing trick dives, the three had been a triumvirate.

Twelve-year-old boys ordinarily disdain seven-year-old girls. But when the little girl essays the most difficult dive, and doesn't cry when she knocks the wind out of her chubby body, respect replaces disdain.

Adults looked on and smiled.

"Did you ever see anything cuter than that Kerwin infant with the Blake boy?"

"Except her way with the Henderson lad," someone would reply. "Orders them both around like slaves."

"And they look after her like soldiers of the queen," another would interpose.

What was companionship in childhood became friendship in adolescence and love in the first flush of maturity. For both young men loved Ruth and she loved both young men.

Many a time she told herself that this was absurd. A woman couldn't love two men. But she did. But no two things in life are *exactly* the same, she argued with herself. Arbitrary mathematical symbols are alike, perhaps, but nothing else. No two apples, no two motor cars, are alike in every possible way. No two people are alike. No two emotions are alike. Therefore, the emotion she felt for Bill must in some way differ from the emotion aroused in her by Tom.

In the same way, one of the two men must love her more—or at least in a different way from the other. But which one? And what was the difference?

When she was seventeen the two young men had come to her.

"You're too young to be thinking of marriage," said Tom. "But in a few years you'll be old enough. And we just want you to know that both of us love you, and this is our formal proposal. All you ever have to do is say 'Yes' to us."

"To both of you?" she giggled.

"Don't be fresh, young fellow," said Bill. "You know what he means."

SHE didn't giggle after they had gone. She was older than her years even then. Constant association with two fine young boys five years older than herself had given her her understanding. She didn't even smile; she wept. What would have been ridiculous to an onlooker was something fine to her.

Here they had come to her, brusque, almost matter-of-fact, told her how they felt, and let it go at that. They didn't have to tell her that, when she made her choice, the victor would feel no triumph, the loser no rancor. There would be, she knew, no interruption in the friendship of the two young men. If Tom won, Bill would be his best man. If Bill won, Tom would stand up with Bill.

And whichever won, the other would forever stand at her shoulder, to aid, protect. . . . She dried her eyes. Some day she would know which she loved. Meanwhile—she was, after all, very young. She had been associated with Tom and Bill for ten years. Some other man . . .

But when Sam Jennings—and you couldn't imagine a more attractive youth—failed to break the hold that Tom and Bill had on her affections, she knew that no man could. It would be one of the two. But which?

She was twenty when Dolph Kerwin, that wise, gay, companionable dad of hers, died. On the very day before apoplexy took him off and made her an orphan, he talked with her about her problem.

"Rock along, young fellow," he said. It was from him that Bill got the habit of calling her "young fellow." "No hurry. Bill and Tom are the kind that stick. Wait until you've made up your mind."

"There's something wrong with me, Dad," she wailed. "A girl ought to know which man she loves."

"Nonsense," said her father. "Trifles weigh the scales when they're perfectly balanced. The inflection of a word, the expression of an eye—you take your time, young fellow."

SHE was three months over twenty when her father's executor told her, with mournful voice, that her brave old dad had left her practically nothing. And she was four months over twenty when, disdaining the proffered aid of half a dozen relatives, she was enrolled in a business college. At twenty-one she was the very competent private secretary of Robert Carey, an old friend of her father's.

The little Dolph Kerwin had left her paid the rent of a tiny apartment. Her own labors provided her clothing, her food, her incidentals. She was one of those that looked as chic in a fourteen-dollar suit as another girl in something that cost one hundred and fifty; she had a way of wearing a two-dollar hat that made it seem worth twenty.

"All sheer nonsense, young fellow," said Lawyer Bill. "Here are Tom and I with all the money in the world—and you're going to marry one of us one day, Ruth—and—"

She turned to Doctor Tom.

"And what reason do you have for making me take money from you?" she asked.

Tom colored.

"Haven't any—that you'd accept. But confound it, Ruth—"

"And bless you both," she said. "You may take me to dinner and send me flowers and candy."

She was twenty-two, dining at the Central Park Casino, the envied of all women, when tragedy broke upon her. One moment she was smiling. Twenty women gazed jealously at her. Why didn't that Kerwin girl make up her mind between those two attractive young men and put one of them back in circulation? Why, in these hard times she was practically the only two-beau girl in New York. At that, even the petty-minded conceded she could have a lot more beaus if she wanted them. But, on the other hand, the two young men could have plenty of other girls. Darn it, they both couldn't marry her; she couldn't marry both of them.

"I'm going away," said Bill.

"Me, too," said Tom.

"Week-ending somewhere?" Ruth asked casually.

TOM shook his head.

"Rising young physicians only week-end in places where Ruth Kerwin is also Friday-to-Mondaying," he said. "This is more than a week-end. There's a chap in Vienna that knows more about the larynx than anyone else. He's agreed to take me on with him. I'm sailing on Wednesday. Now, my dear Miss Kerwin, you've never been in Vienna, but I have. And I assure you that no place could be more delightful. A young married couple could have the swellest time—"

"Why, you make me laugh," interrupted Bill. "Don't listen to him, young fellow. You take Buenos Aires. Now *there's* a city! I haven't been there, but I'm sailing on Friday. Larmour and Company are sending a brilliant young attorney down there to make contracts—"

"They're sending you because you're a stockholder," jeered Tom.

"And Ravensky is taking you because you gave money to his hospital," Bill derided.

They both grinned.

"The whys don't matter. You're leaving me," said Ruth.

They both nodded.

(Continued on page 49)

Her voice was harsh. "Tom, *there* was a man. Never mind who it was"

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With Prosperity comin' back we all got to have courage and face it the best way we can—mebby we'll weather it

Illustrated by Ray Rohn

Steeled for Prosperity

By Don Marquis

THEY tell me Prosperity's comin' back afore long," said the Old Soak, "and I been wonderin' what it's gonna do to me when it does.

"If it don't come too quick, I'm gonna be prepared to meet it cheerful and look it in the eye. I been kinda gettin' myself stocked up against Prosperity's return. You see them socks? Good socks. Six pairs for a dollar! See this overcoat? Thirty-nine dollars and seventy-five cents! Look me over, head to heel! Everything new, and everything way below what I used to pay three or four years ago!

"If Prosperity returns too quick—afore I can manage to buy everything I really need—it's gonna hit me a terrible blow! I'm gettin' ready as far as I'm able to take Prosperity on the chin when it returns. My hope is that it's gonna come back gradual enough so I can absorb the shock without feelin' it too hard. I been halfway ruined by the Depression, and if Prosperity comes back with too much speed and wallop, before I get myself set for it, it's gonna ruin me the other half way.

"As far as I can make out from my readin' and from exchangin' ideas with the master minds which infest Jake Smith's speakeasy, the thing that gave this country a jolt was havin' so much more of the necessities of life than there was any necessity for. They had to be sold at a high price so everybody would have money enough to spend for a lot of other things which somebody told 'em they needed.

"Not that I ever been able to make much headway with political economy, nor any other kind of economy. I never been one of these here Napoleons of Finance.

"The difference between me and them Napoleons of Finance is this: When I set down in front of a mess of figures and diagrams and statistics and try to study 'em, pretty soon I go to sleep. But when a Napoleon of Finance sets down and studies 'em, after a while he gets up and goes into the bathroom and shoots himself.

"This is just another proof to me we ought to return to a simpler way of livin'. When I was a kid, nearly sixty years ago, there wasn't half as many bathrooms in this country as there is now. And there wasn't half as many suicides. There's too much luxury the last few years—bathtubs where you can recline in the warm water, with a plugged-in telephone to bring in word of trouble at one elbow, and a bookshelf at the other full of diagrams and statistics.

"When I was a kid I had to take a Saturday night bath every week in the kitchen in a copper wash-boiler, and few people thought of suicide. The Saturday night all-over was bad enough in itself, without draggin' in suicide too.

"Another thing that's gonna strike me kinda hard when the Depression's over is my wife's principles about work. My old daddy left me considerable land when he died, and always when I wanted some money it's been easy enough to put a mortgage onto another lot or two. Well, the last two or three years my wife ain't orated much about a steady job, but just as soon as there's a ragin' job with teeth and claws on every corner again, seekin' who it may devour, I'm gonna be nagged and henpecked again three times a day to sacrifice my life to these here mammals of industry.

"A lot of people who are always jawin' about work oughta spend more time readin' the Good Book. 'Consider the lilies," says King Solomon; 'they never done a day's work in their life, and yet they're all spangled up like a circus parade!' 'Go to the Ant, thou Slugger,' says King Solomon, 'and quit sluggin' so hard at the job.' For the ant works itself into a depression buildin' a house on the sands, and what's the use? The rain falls, and the storm comes, and it's all washed away, or else a cow steps on it and squashes it. 'Look at the little busy bee,' says King Solomon. For the bee works all summer makin' honey for winter, and in the fall somebody comes along and robs the hive.

"Everybody's kickin' against what they call the Machine Age; but I look forward to the day when every member of the entire human race will be presented with a machine, the day he is born, which will do all his work for him until the day he makes his departure. And he won't have nothin' to do but sit around and meditate on how glorious life is, and what he'd do if he had ten million dollars.

"I used to be a kind of a piker myself. I used to sit around and speculate on what I'd do if I had a million dollars. But I got more ambitions than that now; I ain't a cheap skate no longer. When I get a little leisure nowadays I sit around and speculate on how I'd spend *ten* million dollars.

"Well, at a time like this, with Prosperity threatenin' to come back, we all got to have courage and face it the best way we can—mebby we'll weather it through somehow.

"Jake Smith's got one of them old charts that says acrost the top of it: Don't Sell America Short. He says to me yesterday: 'Gosh, Clem, I didn't! I didn't sell it at all! I bought it, and I kept right on buyin' it, till I *couldn't* sell it! And now look at me and America!'

"'Cheer up, Jake,' I says; 'the gover'ment's gonna do somethin' for us, afore long.'

"'Yeah?' says Jake. 'Such as?'

"'Repeal that liquor amendment, mebby, and make it legal again,' says I.

"'Yeah?' says Jake. 'That's great news, that is—ain't it?—for a man in the bootleggin' line of business! Huh!'

"Which just goes to show that it's plumb impossible to please everybody."

A BULLETIN FROM ARCHY THE COCKROACH

i was down in shinbone alley
yesterday on a visit
to mehitabel and her queer kittens
the ones which came
to her maternal care
after her journey through the southwest
damn them archy she said to me
i cant teach them to purr
and mew like kittens should
they only growl and bark
and yesterday the five of them
raided a butcher shop
around the corner and came home
with a whole lamb
and a cop chasing them
they turned on him
and tore half his clothes off of him
and he went away howling
that he would probably have
hydrophobia
archy they dont take after
any of my folks at all
i am beginning to think
they are a bunch of wild dogs
what have i ever done
to have these offspring wished on me
poor mehitabel
she gets such bad breaks
but wot the hell archy wot the hell
she says my motto is toujours gai
i may have made a false step or two
but i am always the lady
and theres a dance or two
in the old dame yet archy

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In the Viceroy's Villa

A story of love and a gallant rescue in the days of Spanish glory

By Herbert Ravenel Sass

THE girl who sat in the cabin of the Santa Anna, gazing across the table at Captain Africa, realized suddenly that the door directly behind him was opening. There was an indescribable menace in the slow, mysterious movement. Her lips were parted to cry out when a swift thought stopped her—the thought that nothing which might now happen could be worse than the fate already staring her in the face. This pirate, this Captain Africa, whose ship had pursued and taken the Santa Anna and who now sat with her at the table, had heard her through without the flicker of an eyelash. If she had hoped for mercy from him, that hope had all but perished.

The moments lengthened into an eternity. Inch by inch the door behind Captain Africa was swinging inward, slowly, steadily, without a sound. She stared at it, yet now she scarcely saw it; now suddenly her mind was possessed by the dreadful fact that she was the captive, the helpless prize, of this tall, sun-bronzed pirate chief.

She shuddered. There had been fearful tales in Piuma, as in all the other Peruvian coast towns, of the nameless cruelties of the buccaneers. She had been mad to suppose that her story might touch him, that he might help her. Her oval face, ivory-white under her heavy black hair, grew whiter. The door was still moving slowly, slowly. It stood well ajar now. Suddenly she saw, in the narrow opening of the doorway, a face.

She sat staring; her dry lips quivered, but no sound came from them. Suddenly a man sprang through the half-opened door behind Captain Africa. He did not, as he might have done, leap upon Africa's back where he sat in his chair. Instead, he sprang to Africa's right, and his outstretched hand snatched up a pistol lying on the table. He wheeled and leveled the weapon at Africa's forehead. He was a thick-set, heavy-shouldered man; his dark face above his black pointed beard was smeared with blood from a cut on his cheek, his shirt of fine, white, silk-like stuff had been half torn from him.

"Captain Africa," he whispered in Spanish, "if you move, I shall blow out your brains."

CAPTAIN AFRICA leaned back in his chair, staring up at the man. The girl shrank from the table. "Don Perez!" she gasped. Africa turned his head and smiled at her.

"So this is Perez," he said coolly, "that terrible Don Perez de Carbajal, your jailer, of whom you have been telling me!"

He turned his head again, gazing steadily into the muzzle of the pistol.

"How comes this, señor?" he asked sternly. "I ordered my men to lock you and your people in the forecastle until we had taken what we needed from your ship. How is it that you are not there with the others?"

"That does not matter," the Spaniard replied bluntly. "It is not important how I gave your cutthroats the slip. What is important is the fact that I have you now at my mercy. It will be well, Captain Africa, to believe me when I say that I shall shoot you in your chair if you attempt to move or cry out."

Captain Africa studied the man through narrowed eyes. The girl, Curi Coylure, had told him much about Don Perez; evidently she had not exaggerated his resourcefulness and resolution. If any rash plan of action had been forming in Africa's mind, he went no farther with it.

"You have the advantage of me at the moment, señor," he said. "I loaded that pistol myself, so I know that it carries a double charge. I promise you that I shall not cry out or move against you."

He nodded toward the vacant chair at the end of the table. "It is my habit to keep my promises," he continued. "You can sit there in comfort and tell me what you want of me."

Don Perez frowned. "I shall not sit," he replied. "I want one thing of you, Captain Africa, and I shall have it now or I shall kill you before your men can come to you. I stood outside that door and heard all that this girl has told you. She is in my charge; it is my business to carry her on to Lima. I want your pledge, your word of honor, that, when you have looted the ship, the girl shall depart in it in my keeping. Your men may find me here at any moment, so you must decide quickly. I give you one minute to answer; then I shall shoot."

AGAIN Africa's keen gray eyes studied the man who threatened him. If he was looking for some sign of weakness, he found none. In this extraordinary drama in the Santa Anna's cabin, Perez was playing his desperate game with an audacity which Africa himself could hardly have excelled. If he carried out his threat the sound of the shot would bring Africa's men at once to the cabin; but Africa realized with a complete finality that this fact would not deter Don Perez de Carbajal.

He smiled, not unpleasantly. "I see, señor," he said, "that you are not a man to be trifled with. My minute of grace must be nearly up. It will not help the lady if you blow a hole in my head. I give you the pledge that you require."

He turned to the girl. "It is a pity, señorita," he told her. "Your story moved me. I had made up my mind to help you, to take you back to Piuma to the man you love. Now it appears that you must go on to Lima to the man you hate. This stern Perez, your jailer, will not permit me to res-

Even as she laughed and talked with the others, her thoughts were of Manco

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cue beauty in distress. It is my misfortune, and I greatly regret it."

The Santa Anna, stripped of such provisions and gear as the pirates needed, was now hull-down on the horizon. Africa's thoughts dwelt upon the girl on board of her, going forward to so strange a fate. He repeated the gentle cadences of her name: "Curi Coylure." Golden star, she had said it meant in the ancient language of her people.

LIMA was a great city, the capital of that rich empire which Spain had taken from the ancient Peruvian Incas whose glory the Spaniards had shattered and whose fabulous wealth they had despoiled. In Lima, Africa knew, Curi Coylure would be as far beyond his reach as the stars; Don Perez de Carbajal, too, would be safe from him there.

The amazing story which she had told him kept running through his mind; the despair in her eyes remained an oppressive memory. A futile anger grew in him. He could not rid himself of it; it gnawed at him hour after hour.

Five nights afterward the Fortune backed her yards off the Bay of Callao, the port of entry to Lima which lay some seven miles inland. A longboat, manned by six oarsmen, left the vessel and headed into the bay, showing no light. It picked its way furtively among the shipping and came to rest at the head of a deserted wooden pier. Captain Africa, wearing the clothes and the arms of a somewhat needy Spanish soldier of fortune, landed and waved his hand to the men in the boat as it pulled away into the darkness.

AT ABOUT ten o'clock of a cloudless morning, a muleteer, a slight, dark young man, strolled into the great plaza in Lima in front of the viceroy's palace. The plaza was thronged. It was always at that hour the heart of the gay city's activities. Around the central fountain with its bronze statue of Fame were ranged the carts of flower vendors; surrounding these a multitude of calashes, the open, two-wheeled chaises of the country, moved slowly through the dense crowd of people on horseback and on foot—Spaniards, Indians, mestizos and blacks. In each calash sat a young woman elegantly dressed, distinguished almost without exception by the vivacious beauty for which the Peruvian ladies of mingled Spanish and native blood were famous.

Through this gay throng the muleteer made his way unnoticed. Muleteers were of little individual importance in a country possessing a nobility wealthier than that of Spain itself. He passed amid the calashes along the north side of the square before the viceroy's palace, then along the east side faced by the imposing residence of the Archbishop of Peru. His black eyes flashed quick, intent glances at the young women in the calashes. He seemed to be searching among them for someone.

Illustrated by Frank Godwin

"You thought to match the best blade of Lima!" he taunted

THE muleteer came around the fountain. Suddenly his eyes narrowed. They were fixed on the veiled face of the lady in the yellow calash which had just entered the square. She was dressed entirely in white and in her black hair she wore a single dark red flower; her veil of finest cambric was drawn so that her features were only vaguely distinguishable. His eyes rested there with a strange intensity for a moment, then shifted to the face of the cavalier with the black pointed beard sitting his horse beside the calash. The muleteer's expression changed to one of passionate, concentrated hatred. The Spaniard on the roan horse turned his head; the muleteer looked downward so that his face was hidden.

When he looked up again, the Spaniard's broad back was turned; he had reined in his horse and was talking to an elderly bent man in the black robe of a lawyer. The calash, meanwhile, was moving slowly through the dense throng toward the fountain. The muleteer, in evident haste, purchased a bouquet of flowers from a vendor, then made his way quickly through the crowd toward the yellow calash.

The Spaniard was still talking to the bent man in the black robe. The muleteer held out his bouquet toward the veiled lady in the calash; the Negro driver, fully occupied in guiding his mule through the throng, paid no attention to him; the lady, looking straight ahead, did not glance at him until he spoke to her in Spanish.

At the sound of his voice a gasp escaped her; she turned quickly, staring at him through her veil. He spoke to her rapidly in some language that was not Spanish; she replied in the same tongue, breathing fast, her bosom heaving. Her hand trembled as she extended it to take the bouquet. The muleteer, walking beside the slowly moving calash, glanced quickly over his shoulder and saw that the Spaniard on the roan horse was approaching. He spoke again, rapidly, his tones vibrant; then, keeping his back to the Spaniard, he turned away and mingled with the crowd.

ALL the somberness was gone from the muleteer's face; he was smiling, his black eyes flickered and danced. "She loves me," he said under his breath; "she still loves me." But the smile lasted only for an instant; it was replaced almost at once by an anxious frown. He moved among the vendors' carts and passed around the corner of the fountain. A hand touched his shoulder. He turned quickly and saw a tall man in weather-stained buff jacket and boots, a long rapier swinging at his side.

The tall man spoke softly. "It is a long way from Piuma," he said. "You must have ridden fast."

The muleteer started violently, then checked himself. If he had been momentarily alarmed, his lean, alert features now seemed entirely composed.

"I cannot tell you how far it is to Piuma, señor," he replied steadily. "I have never been there."

The gray eyes of the tall man in the buff jacket gazed fixedly into the black eyes of the muleteer. They seemed to be reading the younger man's most secret thoughts. The man spoke quietly in a low voice, almost a whisper.

"If," he said, "a prince in muleteer's clothes came from Piuma to find a princess whom Don Perez de Carbajal had taken away because his master, the viceroy, wanted her, he might find her in the plaza in a yellow calash with Don Perez guarding her. He might find her, I say, but how could he get her away from Perez and the viceroy's men?"

The muleteer's eyes were staring in utter amazement.

"I do not know, señor," he whispered hoarsely.

The tall man smiled.

"It is for you and me to find a way, Manco," he said. "My name is Captain Africa. I have been expecting you, and when I saw a muleteer speak secretly to Curi Coylure while Perez's back was turned, I knew that you had come."

He paused, his strong, sun-browned fingers rubbing his chin.

"I have been in Lima three days," he continued, "and I have learned much. I have studied the ground around the house in the hills where they are keeping Curi Coylure. The viceroy has been away, but he returns tomorrow and we have no time to lose. It is you and I, boy, against the Fox of Lima."

THAT suave and silken-tongued scoundrel, Gonzalvo de Costilla, Viceroy of Peru, known to his many enemies as the Fox of Lima, sat under a rose arbor in the palace garden, sipping Nasca wine from a gold cup. The viceroy—a

(Continued on page 34)

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Another pair of marriage licenses will shortly be issued on Little Bee Bend Plantation. The Widow Duck, who is better for romance than money in the mails, made the necessary arrangements

War Baby's Mamma

By Roark Bradford

WAR BABY'S papa had been a soldier in Uncle Sam's war and his mamma drank a fifth of gin every Saturday night and walked the big road like a man. Now War Baby, just turning fifteen, seemed headed for no good.

"Hit ain't for me and you to jedge," B'r Charlie told the Widow Duck, "but I bet dat War Baby er Sissy's stole yo' hen. De Lawd say, 'Blessed is de lamb which follow in behime de old sheep, but wharfore do de sheep turn out to be a goat, she stinketh like a 'gater and biteth like a sarpint.'"

B'r Charlie was the one-legged blacksmith of Little Bee Bend plantation, and, as a side line, he was a Free Will preacher. The Widow Duck had just confided to him that somebody had stolen one speckled hen from her coop.

The Widow Duck knew that she should report the theft to Giles, the foreman, but Giles, she felt, was unreasonably harsh on petty thieves, and she could not find it in her kindly old heart to subject even a chicken thief to the harshness of the foreman's wrath.

"De Lawd say jest dat, I reckon," she admitted reluctantly. She always hated to acknowledge that B'r Charlie was right, but her hen was missing and in view of Sissy's bad reputation his quotation seemed to fit the point.

"I wouldn't 'cuse nobody falsely," B'r Charlie went on, "but I bet dat boy stole de wood offn yo' woodpile so's his gin-reekin' maw c'd cook dat hen, too."

"You reckon?" The Widow Duck was slow to believe evil of anyone, whereas she knew B'r Charlie never believed anything else. "I ain't missed no wood."

"He a rogue, ain't he?" the blacksmith demanded. "You know he bound to be a rogue, and don't de Prophet say, 'Behold, he cometh like a thief in de night, and verily he'll take yo' last, onless you keeps yo' lamp so trimmed—'"

"WHOA-UP!" interrupted the Widow Duck. "Hold on!" For years she and B'r Charlie had kept up a running argument on the Scriptures, and most of the time B'r Charlie's glib tongue and unfettered imagination had won. When the Widow Duck outquoted him she found victory sweet. And it was to outquote B'r Charlie rather than to defend the hapless War Baby that she said: "'Blessed is him which be's not de jedge, but whosoever beareth a false lie on de chilluns, let him abide therein.' So say de Sperrit."

B'r Charlie began hammering loudly upon a plow point. He hammered until the Widow Duck waddled out of the shop, chuckling with satisfaction.

Out in the warm dust of the big road, the Widow Duck felt pretty good. Here it was the middle of July, and the crops were all clean and laid by. On either side of the road the tall, heavily foliaged cotton grew rank and green. The limbs overlapped in the middles, and the Johnson grass had no chance to sprout. Just ahead, the willows branched cool and gentle over the bayou. The water in Willow Chute, she knew, was low because it had been a long time since it had rained. That would make the gar and buffalo easy to catch. And too, the drought was death on the boll weevils.

"Mind out, honey," the Widow Duck called to a little girl—whose child, she did not know at the moment. "Don't git too clost and fall in de water. And don't step on no water moccasin."

"Yas'm, Mis' Duck," the child answered as she politely "drug her foot."

THE Widow Duck waddled on, slowly, comfortably. A bird sang as she crossed the bayou bridge, and a katydid fiddled. Then a breeze fanned her face gently, filling her nostrils with the scent from the fields. She smiled.

"Thanky kindly, Lawd," she said. "I'd do as much for you efn I could." She always spoke intimately like that to the Lord when things went well. The fine weather, the cotton, the abundance of fish in the bayou, and the fact that she had just squelched B'r Charlie with a quotation, made her feel very happy.

The Widow Duck did not like B'r Charlie. It was not in her warm heart to dislike any of God's creatures, man or beast. But she came as near to disliking B'r Charlie as it was possible for her to do.

"I sho' sot dat nigger to squirmin', didn't I?" she chuckled to herself. "Dat Scripture must er been mighty hot to burn him up like hit did."

She recalled the exact words that had set the blacksmith to hammering in such confusion: "Blessed is him which be's not de jedge—" That was not what had embarrassed him. They had argued that out long ago. B'r Charlie had maintained to her satisfaction that it was his business to denounce sin and how could a man denounce sin if he could not judge between sinfulness and righteousness? The Widow Duck believed that B'r Charlie frequently abused the right of judging, but it was not for her to say.

"—but whosoever beareth a false lie on de chilluns—" The Widow Duck stopped suddenly. "I bet to my soul dat's what shet dat nigger up!" she exclaimed. "I bet War Baby ain't stole my hen, and B'r Charlie was 'cusin' him falsely!"

She tightened her mouth, looked defiantly toward the blacksmith shop and gave her head a resolute toss. "I'm gonter find out," she declared.

She quickened her steps and pointed her toes toward the cabin where Sissy and War Baby lived. The cabin was off to itself, half hidden by a weeping willow. She had not visited the cabin since old Bathey died the winter before, but she knew every crook and turn in the bayou path.

Nor did the Widow Duck know much about Sissy. She had seen her "wage chopping" cotton that summer, and heard much talk of her sinful carryings-on, but she had not visited her at her cabin. "Blessed is me 'cause I minds my own, but whosoever go rootin' in yuther fo'ks's business let 'em abide therein," was the way the Widow Duck felt about it, and she considered Sissy's sinfulness to be strictly Sissy's business.

THE cabin was a sad sight. As the Widow Duck climbed the wooden steps over the yard fence, she could not help noticing that weeds instead of flowers grew in the yard. Piles of trash were scattered about, too: old, rusting cans, broken bottles, and—yes, there it was—a pile of chicken feathers! Speckled chicken feathers!

The sight of the feathers hurt Widow Duck. She stopped halfway down the stile and was about to turn to go, when Sissy appeared at the door. Sissy's hair was bushing about her head as though a decent comb had never touched it, and her dress scarcely covered her body. Her face was hard and pinched, and her eyes rolled suspiciously. The worst touch, the Widow Duck thought, was a cheap, wheezy accordion, which Sissy held in her two hands.

"What you want?" Sissy demanded inhospitably.

The Widow Duck faced Sissy and instinctively put on a friendly smile. "I's Mis' Duck Miller," she explained.

The accordion flapped out an asthmatic sound as Sissy dropped one end of it to free a hand and brush the hair back from her face. "Yeah?" she grunted.

The Widow Duck waddled down the last two steps and to the porch where she sat down and spread her fat, bare legs across the cool planks. She could

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feel the lack of welcome in Sissy's words but she wanted to "catch her wind" before returning up the bayou path, and she decided she might as well while away the minutes pleasantly as she rested.

"I been livin' on Little Bee all my life," she said, "and I always likes to meet up wid de strangers which comes and goes."

Sissy continued to stand in the doorway looking with distrust upon her guest. "Yeah?" she grunted again.

"I hyars," went on the Widow Duck, "dat you comes f'm down twarge Monroe way. How de crops down dar?"

"How I know?" snorted Sissy. "I ain't been down since de new crop started."

The Widow Duck was still resting. "Well, is dat a fack?" she said. "How was de crops down dat way last year?" Just making talk and Sissy knew it.

Sissy's eyes narrowed and her nostrils flattened. "Look hyar, 'oman," she demanded, "what you huntin' for at my house?"

The Widow Duck had already found more than she wanted to find in that pile of chicken feathers. Nor was she accustomed to being received in such manner on Little Bee Bend. The combination of disappointment and being unwelcome came near ruffling her even temper. "Daughter," she stated without rancor, but with a coolness that seemed foreign to her, "I ain't huntin' a blessed thing at yo' house. I comed hyar meanin' no harm to nobody, and quick as I gits my wind, I'm goin' back de same way."

There was such defiant truthfulness in the Widow Duck's tone that Sissy felt uncomfortable. She fidgeted uncertainly for a minute. "You means hit?" she almost begged. "You means you jest come to offer friends wid me?"

THE Widow Duck grunted. "Hit take two to friend," she said. "I friends wid dem which friends back, and dem which don't I passes by like a sundown breeze."

Sissy almost ran over to Widow Duck, and sat down. "You means hit?" she implored again. "Efn you wants to friend wid me, I'm pyore hongry for 'em. I been so lonesome down hyar wid nobody but my boy and some stray nigger mens dat I c'd cry my poor eyes out."

The Widow Duck's coolness melted and her big, old heart slopped over. She put a fat arm about Sissy and hugged her. What did a stolen chicken amount to anyway? It was an old hen, and it hadn't laid an egg since last fall.

"Don't go bawlin', honey," she soothed. "Hit's all right. 'Blessed is him which be's not de jedge. God will change conditions,' honey. So say de Sperrit."

"Hit been too lonesome," wailed Sissy. "All de ladies gived me de go-by."

"I might not be a lady," declared the Widow Duck, "but I wouldn't give a dog de go-by. Let alone a fine gal like you."

Sissy cried a while. And then she talked and talked. Her story was long and complicated and she was hungry to tell it to some understanding soul. The Widow Duck missed parts of it but she understood the salient points.

Sissy had married up with a soldier during the early part of the war, but the soldier went away. The white folks tried to get Uncle Sam to pay her some money, but Uncle Sam wrote back that the soldier had married up to another woman before he married up to Sissy and that Uncle Sam was paying the other woman all the money. Sissy had worked in a laundry, supporting herself and her son until the dampness gave her wet joints, and then she took to the cotton fields, wage chopping and picking, and making barely enough to buy bread and clothes.

"And you ain't never married no more?" asked the Widow Duck.

"No'm," said Sissy. "I comed mighty nigh marryin' when de white fo'ks was tryin' to git de money f'm Uncle Sam. But when I didn't git no money, de man give me de go-by. I'm too ugly to git a man onless I got some money."

The Widow Duck studied Sissy. She was not very good-looking, and that was a fact. But she would look a heap better in a decent dress. "Efn you spunt yo' money on clothes," Widow Duck suggested, "instid er buyin' a bottle er gin ev' Sad'day night—"

Sissy laughed hysterically, and then cried. "I ain't spunt a copper cent on gin," she declared, "never in my life. But don't tell nobody."

"Hunh?" grunted the Widow Duck. "You wawks de road like a man, honey. I seed you wid my own eyes."

Sissy shook her head. "Dat's a trick," she explained. "I jest do dat to fool de mens. I come all de way up hyar whar nobody don't know me and make out like I'm gittin' money in de mails f'm Uncle Sam, so's some man'll love me good enough to marry up to me. But I ain't got no clothes and I ain't got no grub, so efn I'm gittin' money in de mails I'm got to spend hit, ain't I? So I gits me a bottle and fills hit wid water and den wawks de road ev'y Sad'day night, staggerin' and goin' on, like I'm pyore reekin' wid money, and don't keer who likes hit."

THE Widow Duck could hardly believe it, but the idea amused her. "And good enough," she maintained. "Any man which bites at gin—well, water serve him jest right!" She chuckled silently so that her stomach bobbed up and down. "Gittin' any nibbles on dat kind er bait?"

"Not many," Sissy admitted. "One gen'mun brang me his 'cordeen to loan me, and another gen'mun brang me a hen."

The Widow Duck almost choked. "A hen, hunh?"

"Yas'm," said Sissy, "but de hen so old and tough dat I'm havin' a hard time gittin' hit cooked."

"Not namin' no names?" suggested Widow Duck.

Sissy squirmed bashfully. "Not namin' no names," she repeated.

The Widow Duck sat in silence for a while, thinking. It was a difficult process for her. "When did 'at gen'mun bring dat hen?" she asked.

"Last Chuesday night, late," Sissy replied.

The Widow Duck recalled that she discovered the theft on Wednesday morning. "Some rogue," she mumbled, under her breath, "stole dat hen off'n me and gived her to you."

Sissy hadn't asked the gentleman where the hen came from, she said. "But he was kind enough to bring along a little firewood to cook 'em," she added.

The Widow Duck experienced a vaguely uncomfortable sensation in her head. The last bit of information was trying to connect with some memory but

(Continued on page 36)

Illustrated by Harry Burne

"I'm gonter set on you to you tell me," the Widow Duck promised. "And efn dat ain't heavy 'nuff," she added, "I'll bounce up and down"

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Amateur Bride

By George Agnew Chamberlain

The Story Thus Far:

CONFRONTED by poverty, beside herself because she thinks the man she loves—the wealthy Henry Morton—has dropped her, Margaret Schuyler, New York society girl, marries John Wright, whom she regards as a brutal boor. Understanding the situation perfectly, Wright makes a desperate effort to win his wife. She remains (outwardly, at least) cold and distant.

Wright is a mining engineer—a strong, audacious man. Called to the Dos Picos mine in Mexico, he goes—after telling Margaret to do *exactly* as she pleases in his absence. On his return, a difficult problem awaits him: Morton is still in love with Margaret, has been seeing her frequently.

A wise man, Wright makes no effort to keep the two apart. Morton, he is well aware, is a dangerous rival: handsome, prominent, rich. But he thinks he understands him, knows his fundamental weakness—and is not afraid. . . . Then, one evening, he finds Margaret in Morton's arms. "John," Margaret calmly announces, "I'm leaving you." She goes to her room to pack a bag. Whereupon Wright puts Morton to the test. He informs him that he has lost every cent he has. "But," he continues, "this night's work will put us on our feet again. You're going to pay me a quarter of a million dollars—or see your name headlined in every paper in New York."

Morton, badly frightened, does not meet the test. He asks Margaret for more time "to think things over. . . ." The girl is bewildered, desperate. Again and again she has heard her husband speak of one "Meg," a barmaid at the Dos Picos, and her uncanny understanding of men. She goes to Mexico, finds Meg at her bar, begs her (guardedly) for advice. By way of answer, Meg picks up some dice, shows her how to cheat with them. "I'll never learn," says Margaret. Meg laughs. "You'd better," she says. "That trick has stood between a girl and ruin more than once. You've *got* to learn it."

IX

MARGARET did not become expert at one sitting in manipulating the dice, but she at least absorbed the mechanics of how the thing was done. "What's the use?" she said. "I couldn't cheat anyway. Something wouldn't let me."

"Honest?" said Meg. "Some day perhaps you'll learn there's nothing to be ashamed of about being a woman night and day. But I guess you and me must be different."

"I guess we are," said Margaret, "but I wish we weren't. I'd like to be like you."

"Have your joke, kid; have your joke."

"I'm not joking. You're the one that's truly honest. Meg, have you ever been in love?"

"And I had the measles once."

"No—please," said Margaret earnestly. "These men up here—so far away—they're a picked lot, you said so yourself. But you must have liked somebody more than the rest."

"Sure."

"He was a fool or he'd have taken you away—married you."

Meg laughed shortly. "All, bar him, would have done it at some time or other, and jumped at the chance! Those things come and go in a man's mind, but never in his."

"You thought he was wonderful, didn't you?" asked Margaret, her eyes fixed with a peculiar intensity on Meg's inscrutable face. "A strong man? A real man?"

"You're young," said Meg. "You ain't growed. What difference would it have made? When you get like that, it's never the man—it's you."

"I see—yes, I can see that. But why wouldn't you marry any of the others?"

"Because I ain't such a ninny as to think that when you marry a man you marry his bank roll. Take a look at me and fill your eye. What do you see? I can be married to five checking accounts at a time with my ring finger still free to point at the door. And that reminds me: Any minute now, if you don't open it and run along, somebody is apt to lift that bar with a stick of dynamite."

"Meg," begged Margaret, leaning across the bar, "please. Let me take your place."

Meg stared at her for a long moment. "You're crazy," she said. "You must have ate a bale of loco weed. Any other night you'd be crazy, but this is Thursday, and that makes you plumb crazy."

"Why? What has Thursday got to do with it?"

"Everything. Besides, didn't I tell you tonight would put a bonnet on my pile?"

"You mean money?"

"Cash," said Meg. "Cash only goes."

"But I don't want the money," said Margaret; "you can have it all. I've got almost a thousand dollars. You can have half of that as well."

Meg's eyes widened and then began slowly to narrow until they were two long slits out of which she looked at Margaret long and steadily. "What's the matter with you?" she asked at last. "If you don't want money, what do you want?"

"I want to be different," said Margaret. "You don't understand what I've been through. I want to start all over again. I don't want to do all the paying. I want to be like you."

Again Meg was silent for a long moment of calculation. "You really mean you want to play a game and hand me all the takings? Not your own dough, mind you, because I wouldn't grab any baby's savings. I mean whatever comes in tonight?"

"Every cent of it."

Meg considered deliberately, her eyes almost closed, but abruptly came to some momentous decision. "That," she said, "would go into the bank. Here!" She pushed toward Margaret the dress she had just finished. "Take this. Run into my room, strip, and try it on."

Five minutes later, hatless and wearing the new dress, Margaret was seated in Meg's high chair. She had always thought of gingham as a filled material that stood out rather stiffly but this simple little frock, cut to the figure, seemed to disclose all that it hid. She felt and looked nervous as Meg passed to a table in the center of the room and sat down facing her.

"Now let me see you do your stuff," she said. "I'm the guy you want to make buy something. How would you work him?"

"I don't know," said Margaret. "Is there anything special?"

"IS THERE!" exclaimed Meg. "Watch me." She settled her chin in her hand, fastened her eyes on Margaret's, and held them until Margaret sharply turned her head away. "You got it all right."

"Yes," said Margaret, "I got it."

"Now you try it. Say I'm a man and there's a bunch of them hanging around. Look at me as if you didn't see or care for the rest. Make me turn red in the face."

"I'll try," murmured Margaret, rather bewildered, and did.

"For the love of Flint and fishes, what are you trying to do? Scare me? What do you think? Would a man stay in the middle of the road if he saw two headlights bearing down on him at sixty miles an hour?"

Margaret laughed. "He'd run!"

"Yes, and the wrong way. Why, if I had your eyes, I could recover gold from the soles of a man's boots through his ears! Think of somebody you've loved, and if you can't do that, go it one

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better—think of a man you hate like hell."

"Let me try again," said Margaret, sobering. She let herself go. She gave Meg a long look of love and enticement that made her face change from disgust to interest, from interest to admiration and from admiration to awe. "Was that better?"

"You've learned what every woman knows in the cradle and remembers in her grave," murmured Meg. "God help the men!"

Margaret, listening, turned her head toward the street. "I think I hear them coming."

Meg sprang to her feet. "Quick! Run into my room there and shut the door. It's a spring lock. But wait a minute. Get this: When you hear me laugh, slip out and take my place. Walk bent over so they can't see you and sit in the low chair until I kick you. Pop up when I pop down and be quick about it. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"You won't forget?"

"No."

"Get the motto over the bar before you go: 'Who buys the key, must still win me.' Chew on that while you're waiting."

Margaret disappeared into Meg's room. Meg hastened to lift the bar from the door, ran around to resume her accustomed place and took up some knitting which she kept on tap for emergencies. Scarcely was she settled when the men came trooping in, Flint at their head.

"Well, Meg," he said, "we got tired of giving the queen ten minutes at a time." He glanced around. "Where is she?"

"The lady that was in here?"

"Who else?"

"She didn't stay a minute. She must have been gone before you got across the way."

"That's a lie," said Matlock with a smile, "but why did you tell it?"

"It ain't a lie at all," said Meg placidly. "You men are such gumps that when you make up your minds ten minutes is going to do one thing, you can't believe it when it does another."

"Bunk," said Bower. "She's in your room, waiting for us to get settled to do her get-away."

"If Meg says the dame breathed on our necks as we went up the street," said Smith ingratiatingly, "that settles it as far as I'm concerned."

Flint, back on his stool, raised the key on high. "Going once!" he called. "Going twice! . . ."

Illustrated by Harry Morse Meyers

MEG poured their orders. Each man took his drink and went to his favorite chair. It was queer, she thought, the way they always went to the same spots, day after day, month in and month out. That was men for you! Flint, his huge pipe laying a smoke screen behind him, crossed to his post of command on the stool. Outside, it was Larry Matlock, general manager of the Dos Picos at twenty-five thousand a year, who stood for omnipotence, but within the precincts of the bar it was Flint who presided and hurled the Jovian thunderbolts. Of the two responsibilities his was more dramatic and occasionally more dangerous. He turned to Meg.

"Did she tell you who was the Mex before she left?"

"She sure did."

"A secret, Meg?" asked Matlock.

"Well, only to a batch of half-baked biscuits like us," said Meg. "It was Cara Chata himself."

There were exclamations on all sides. While the buzz was still humming John Wright entered and closed the door behind him. His anxious eyes swept the room swiftly before he smiled.

"Hello, everybody! Hello, Meg."

"Hello, Jack," said Meg.

"Not a kiss?" said Wright, striving for joviality. "Not even a smile for old times' sake?"

"I'll smile for a dollar, as usual," said Meg.

Wright laid a dollar on the counter. Immediately she raised her eyes. Her face opened to a look of adoration. Her lips twitched and then they broke into a heart-rending smile.

He nodded his head slowly. "Yes, it's like old times. Give me a drink, a double straight."

Bingo Brown had gone to the piano; now he struck a chord. "I'll sing you a song of welcome, Jack."

"We haven't time," wailed Smith, "we're already an hour late getting started!"

"I've got time," said Brown, "plenty of time. I'm broke." He threw back his head and sang in imitation of a dog howling at the moon:

"The gold was in the mountain, the mountain, the mountain!
The gold was in the mountain and I was on the hill!
Why couldn't they have told me, have told me, have told me
The gold was in the mountain before I climbed the hill?"

"Rotten!"

"Your worst yet!"

"Take it off the air!"

Smith actually blubbered: "You've made me cry!"

WRIGHT started around the end of the bar. "Can I go into your room for just a minute, Meg?"

"Sure," said Meg. "Ask Flint for the key."

"Oh," said Wright, turning, "he's got it already, has he?"

"Yes, I've got it," said Flint.

"How about it, boys?" asked Meg. "Do we let Jack size up my room for a minute?"

"Not on your life," said Bower. "He knows how to get a look, if he can afford it!"

Flint shook his head in denial and Wright, with a shrug of his shoulders, walked to the farthest corner of the room, sat down and pulled his hat over his eyes. Nobody paid any attention to him. Anything went Thursday nights—any mood, any behavior—so long as it infringed no clause of an iron law.

"Back away from the piano, Bingo," said Flint. "We're about ready."

As he spoke the street door opened and a man staggered in, clutched at the first chair and sat down. He stared around out of wild eyes half blinded by the lights, and everybody stared at him. He was dressed in city clothes, and though they were mussed and torn in spots they still sang the praises of an excellent tailor. He was a stranger to everybody but Wright, who hunched down in his chair and pulled his hat-brim lower.

"A drink, please," said Morton.

"What kind?" asked Meg.

"Anything strong and straight."

"You'll have to come and get it."

Morton rose, steadied himself, went to the counter and downed the drink at a swallow. "Another, please."

"You look sort of worn," said Flint.

"I'm worn, all right—worn out. Shot up too. Always thought that Yaqui talk was the bunk, but it isn't. We did the last five miles on three rims and a flat tire."

"You were lucky to get through," said Flint. "It's surprising why people come here at all, especially if they don't have to."

"Isn't it though!" said Morton, beginning to revive. He turned and stood with his back to the bar. "How's the hotel? Is it crowded?"

"It will be when you get there," said Bower. "Turn to the right as you go out."

"You can't miss it," said Smith.

MORTON examined everyone and everything, his eyes finally settling on John Wright. He frowned. "Thanks, but I think I'll stay here for a while."

"Tell him the rules, Flint," said Bower impatiently, "or let us throw him out."

"This isn't exactly a public bar, friend," said Flint. "It's closed to the general populace every Thursday evening for a little ceremony, and this happens to be Thursday."

"So it is," said Morton, "but I think I'll stay just the same."

(Continued on page 47)

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Talking Boy

By Owen P. White

Old Geronimo, chief of the Apaches, trusted only one white man—Tom Horn. But that did Tom little or no good: it made him suspect in the eyes of the government. Tom had need of all his amazing loquacity to keep his head. He did it, though—for a while—and found time to cram into his brief career as much Indian fighting as any man who ever lived

"DID you want to see me?"

Mr. Al Sieber, chief of scouts, looked up from his job, which at the moment was that of whittling on the bench in front of the Indian Agency at Fort Apache, and replied: "Maybe so. I told 'em to round up a kid they call the Talking Boy and herd him in here. Are you the feller?"

"I reckon I am," answered the boy. "What do you want?"

"Huh, some direct, ain't you? A straight shooter. Well, I like that. Set down and tell me about yerself; and don't lie none, neither."

The boy grinned. "There ain't a lot to tell," he said, "and it ain't worth lyin' about. My name's Tom Horn; I ain't quite seventeen; about six months ago my old man back in Missouri gimme a lickin', a dandy it was, with a tugstrap, and as soon as I could walk I left home. I footed it clear over to Kansas City, worked there twenty-six days and then came out to Santa Fe nighthawkin' for a freight outfit. For a while I drove stage outa Santa Fe, and now, 'cause the Indians have about cleaned us outa stock, they sent me and another feller down here after a herd of mules. That's all there is to it."

"No," said Sieber, "that ain't all. You ain't lied none to hurt, but you left out something. How about that nickname of yours? They call you the Talking Boy and they tell me that even though you ain't been out here but a few months you can get away with the Mexicans' lingo like you was one of them and that you also sling quite a bit of Apache. Is that so?"

Again Tom Horn grinned. "I dunno," he answered, "but I *can* talk to 'em, if that's what you mean."

Tom Takes a Job

"No, that ain't what I mean," replied the scout, "and it ain't what these Mexicans and Indians mean neither when they call you the Talking Boy. Most anybody can talk to 'em—some. After twenty years I can do a little of it myself, but not enough for what we're pretty soon goin' to be a-needin' around here." He paused, thought a minute, and then he went on: "Come along with me, kid. Let's drift over to the corral where there's always a bunch of bucks and Mexicans hangin' around. I want to watch you talk to 'em."

Watch the boy talk. That was what Sieber meant, and when they were again back on the bench he said:

"Well, kid, you were born with it. It's a gift."

"What is?" asked Tom.

"The way you handle yourself with these Indians. You see, Indians, and Mexicans too, are a good deal like jackasses in the way they talk. Hang a rock on a burro's tail and tie his ears back so's he can't wiggle 'em, an' there ain't no expression whatever to his brayin'. He's gotta have motions to go along with his conversation. So do these Indians, and most of the time their motions mean more'n their words do. An Apache chief, like Geronimo, for instance, can say enough with one grunt and a shrug of his shoulders to keep all the soldiers in Arizona guessing for six months. Now, that's where you come in. You can do the same thing.

"I watched you. When you talked with them Apaches you talked all over, just like they do, and that's why they call you the Talking Boy. You understand 'em; they know it; they like you for it; they'll trust you, and right now if seventy-five a month, a half a dozen ponies, a good rifle and plenty of ammunition an' nothin' to do is any inducement to you you're hired as a civilian scout and an interpreter. I need you."

It was an inducement. Tom signed up and the following morning as he and Sieber, bound on a mysterious mission to Chief Pedro's camp at the north end of the reservation, rode past a dense thicket the old scout stopped and sniffed the air.

"Huh. Tiz-win!" he said and, slipping from his pony, he broke his way through the brush. Tom followed; within a few yards they came upon an Indian busily engaged in unlawfully cooking up a batch of cactus whisky, and right there—the redskin having made the mistake of reaching for a gun—and exactly as he fell, with his head in his own stewpot, they left him.

Life with the Apaches

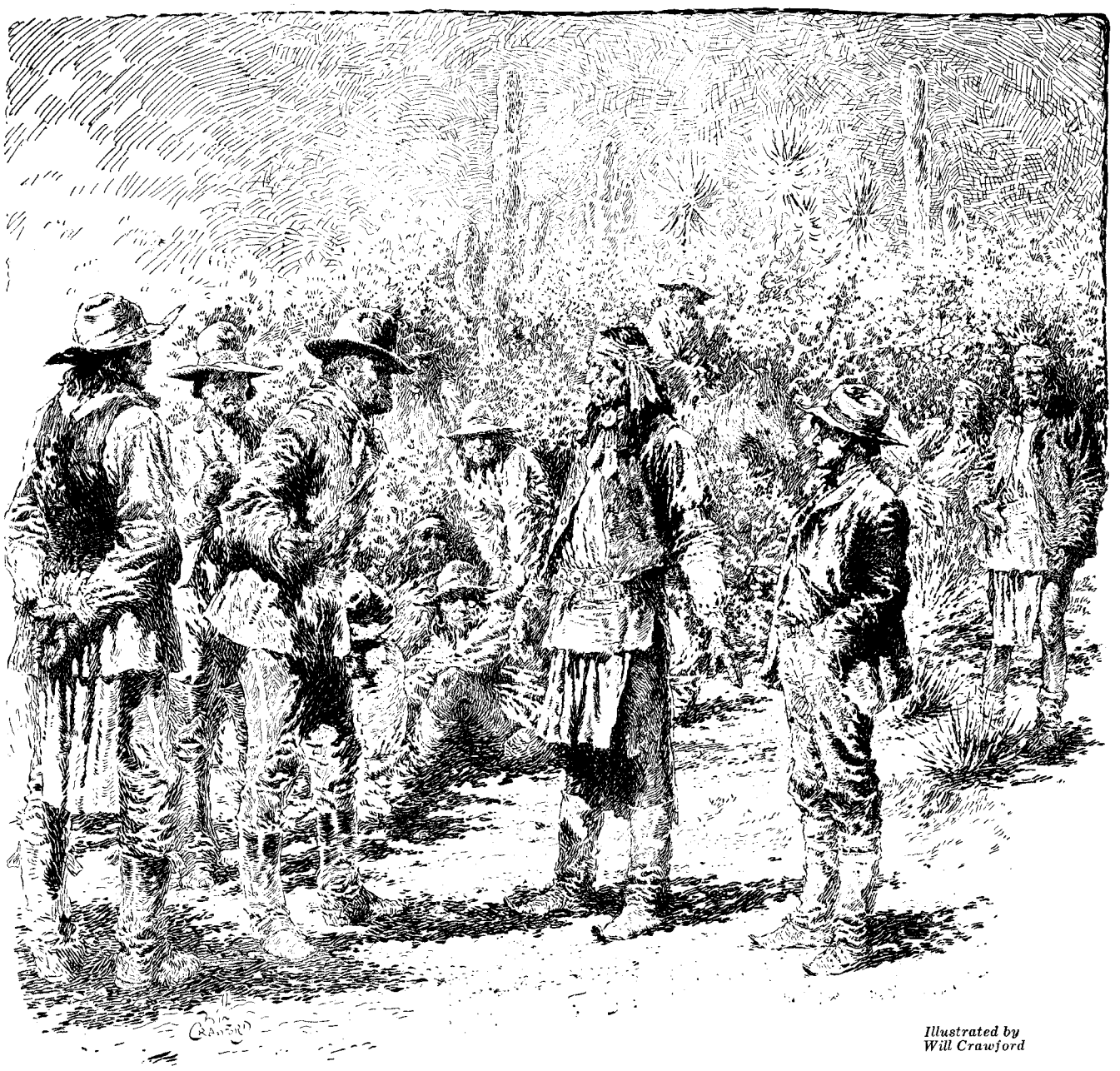
Thus Tom Horn's education got away to a fast start, and the next day he got another large dose of it. Al Sieber went off and left him. It was a queer situation for a lad of seventeen. Suddenly he was grown; he became a lone white man among six hundred Apache braves; his orders were to stay there, become an Indian, learn all he could about their ways and habits, and then, "after a year or so of it I reckon you'll be worth a lot in the Indian wars that are goin' to bust loose soon and that'll keep hell a-poppin around here for a long, long time." That was what Sieber had told him, as Tom Horn stood there and watched the scout ride away.

The Talking Boy immediately found himself occupying a secure niche in Apache social circles. His family responsibilities, however, were very light. His squaw hewed the wood, drew the water, policed the papooses, herded the ponies, tanned the buckskin, did the cooking and sewed beads on his moccasins. All he did was hunt and so for several months he was quite contented and carefree.

In another respect though, as Al Sieber, who had grown old in the Indian country, knew, but as young Tom Horn didn't, there was a good deal of responsibility. It was accumulating on him. The youth was understudying the man: some day Tom Horn would succeed Sieber and when that day arrived he would have to know not only all there was to know about the Apaches themselves but would also have to have a practical, working knowledge of their peculiar diplomacy.

In short, the whole Indian situation in Arizona was difficult. In the late seventies, when Tom Horn went to live with Chief Pedro and his six hundred San Carlos braves, there were six branches to the Apache family. Two of

(Continued on page 38)



Illustrated by Will Crawford

"You are doomed to capture and your tribe to extermination," the old scout told Geronimo

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"That chair," said Ellery, amiably but firmly, "must go. May I?"

Illustrated by D. B. Holcomb

One Man's Taste

A Short Short Story complete on this page

By Richard Connell

MR. AND MRS. WOODLES were proud of their new house. "Simple—but charming" about described it, they thought. They found it in the country, a neglected boarding house for rats, remodeled it, furnished it and transformed it into a thing of beauty. At least, Mrs. Woodles did. About such matters Mr. Woodles admitted he knew little—you might say nothing. He learned that colonial furniture is not bought, but "picked up."

Piece by piece Mrs. Woodles picked up the furniture in sundry barns and attics. With her blood heated by the chase she would shamelessly push into the home of strange rustics and carry off an old four-poster bed right from under Grandpa. Then there would ensue an orgy of scraping, sandpapering, staining and waxing.

There were times when Mr. Woodles felt that he never wanted to smell varnish or hear the word "authentic" again. But he admitted that the result justified the effort and cost. At last the final hooked rug was in precisely the right spot, the framed sampler (by Deborah Wakeman, aged 9) hung over the fireplace, and the chairs, tables and sofas were satisfactorily arranged.

One morning Mrs. Woodles said:

"My cousin Ellery is driving out to see the house. You'll like Ellery, I know. Such exquisite taste! On the subject of what-nots he is an absolute authority."

The authority on what-nots proved to be a long young man, blond and elegant, who inspected Mr. Woodles critically, causing that gentleman to feel like a spurious highboy. As they walked up the path toward the Woodles' house, Ellery stopped and gave a low moan.

"Sick?" queried Mr. Woodles, solicitously.

"That wing, oh, my dear chap, that wing!" moaned Ellery.

"Huh?" said Mr. Woodles. "What's the matter with the wing?"

"Pernicious," murmured Ellery. "One might say flagrant."

"But we had to put the kitchen some place," said Mr. Woodles.

"Of course, we can easily tear that wing down," said Ellery, thoughtfully. They entered the house.

"And this," said Mrs. Woodles, proudly, "is the living-room."

"Not really?" said Ellery. His somewhat piscatorial eye affixed itself to an easy-chair. It was Mr. Woodles' pet chair, placed just right for reading, just near enough to the fire for its occupant to be toasted without being singed.

"THAT chair," said Ellery, amiably but firmly, "must go. May I?"

He trundled it to a remote corner. It left a gap like a missing front tooth.

"Now I'll just put this Hitchcock chair here," said Ellery. "Not veritable Hitchcock, to be sure, but fairly good."

The moving of the chair necessitated the shifting of a table, and that left an oil painting of a bewhiskered Woodles ancestor dangling in such a way that the sight caused Cousin Ellery acute pain. So the picture had to come down.

"Well, while I'm here I might as well make a good job of it," remarked Ellery, with that happy, almost fanatical gleam that comes only to the eyes of born furniture-rearrangers. "Just lend me a hand with that desk, will you, Woodles, like a good fellow?"

Looking like anything but a good fellow, Mr. Woodles complied. Mrs. Woodles fluttered about, masking her distress and saying, "Of course, Ellery, you know best. I know your taste is exquisite."

Mr. Woodles did emit a feeble protest when his favorite chair was entirely banished from the room. But his, "Well, the fact is, I like that chair" only caused the masterful furniture-rearranger to lift an eyebrow and say, "Really? How droll!"

Before he had finished, Cousin Ellery had made the house over. Not even the meat-chopper in the kitchen or the towels in the towel closet were permitted to remain where the Woodles wanted them to be.

Ellery was saying, "And now suppose you knock out that wall and throw the living-room and dining-room together and move that indecent wing around to the back of the house, and abolish that uncanny fireplace—" when Mr. Woodles said, "I'm afraid if you want to get back to the city for dinner, you'd better start now."

Mr. Woodles escorted Cousin Ellery to his glittering new car.

"I guess I don't know much about furniture," observed Mr. Woodles, sadly. Then, with sudden firmness, "But I do know about haberdashery. And motor cars."

"Ah, really?" murmured Ellery.

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Woodles. "Now, take that hat you have on. Blatant, my dear fellow, indubitably blatant!"

He removed the bowler from the head of the surprised Ellery and deftly drop-kicked it over a fence.

"And that collar!" said Mr. Woodles. "Unspeakable! And that dotted tie! Revolting!"

With a quick movement he tore the collar from its moorings.

"I'll retie that tie for you as it should be tied," offered Mr. Woodles; but Ellery, with a treble squeak of dismay, sprang into his car.

Mr. Woodles eyed the car pensively.

"A bit flamboyant for my taste," he announced. "I note you have an extra bugle horn on the front. As you already have a siren, suppose we put the bugle horn on the rear to warn people against bumping into you. Here—I'll move it for you—"

He began to wrench at the bugle horn.

"Hey—now—" the thoroughly disorganized Ellery began to sputter.

"Oh, no trouble at all," said Mr. Woodles. "And while I'm at it, I'll just change the shape of your radiator. I can give it that smart, handmade touch with a few judicious cracks with a heavy hammer. Let me have a hammer from your tool chest, will you, old chap?"

"I will not!" cried Ellery, wildly.

MR. WOODLES stopped twisting at the horn.

"A good-sized stone will serve just as well," he said, "and here is the very stone. What luck!"

But as he stooped to pick up the stone, the frantic Ellery trod heavily on the accelerator and the car whizzed away.

When he returned to the house, Mr. Woodles found his wife in tears.

"I don't like the room this way," she said. "But I suppose Ellery knows best. Such exquisite taste!"

"Let's fix it the way we want it," said Mr. Woodles.

"But Ellery will be furious when he comes again."

"Something tells me he will never come back—if then," said Mr. Woodles. "Where's that chair of mine?"

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She warned him First

Love is not a thing to be reasoned about. Peter Olney reasoned about it night and day. The girl paid no attention whatever

By Hugh MacNair Kahler

Benevolently, as one who purposes to bestow extraordinary favor, he removed the bathrobe. Something in his self-adoration almost compelled you to concur in it

PETER OLNEY noticed that the dark girl in the white swimming suit did not join the group of youths and maidens who lay on the sun-warmed sand at the end of the plank walk that led down from the bathhouses. He also noticed that she might have joined it if she had wanted to, for all of the others, glancing up at her, moved heads or hands in casual greeting and her answering wave and smile and nod held the same quality of careless familiarity.

She was one of the crowd, then. Peter Olney felt a mild interest in her because she preferred her own society to that of the intimately exclusive little circle of converging heads and radiating, basking bodies. Something in the way she walked, something in the government of her slim arms and legs, seemed to suggest that whatever she did would be done because she saw a reason for it, a rational, considered reason.

Peter Olney allowed himself to wonder, idly, about her reason for taking her sun bath alone. As a rule he tried not to speculate about girls, because he knew that it was apt to be a waste of time, and also because it was safer and more sensible to keep your thoughts on other matters. When there wasn't any room for women in your life there wasn't any room for them, either, in your meditations. Nevertheless he meditated a little about this girl and, out of the corner of an eye, he watched her.

A chorus of pleased little squeals drew his glance back toward the group. He chuckled softly as he saw Sam Ludlow, swathed in a lordly striped robe, standing on the bathhouse steps. As usual, Sam's face was graciously benign; it was the face of the good-hearted young prince who knows that the sight of him gives intense joy to his subjects and who is always generously glad to indulge them in this natural and harmless weakness. Slowly, treading springily on the balls of his feet, he descended and approached the circle; his smile became a flashing grin; benevolently, as one who purposes to bestow extraordinary favor, he removed the bathrobe.

Peter Olney chuckled again. He couldn't help liking Sam. There was something in his self-adoration that almost compelled you to concur in it. Sam's conceit wasn't the irritating kind that asks for applause; it merely consented, out of pure human kindness, to let you behold him and rejoice.

To the four girls who lay so suitably at Sam's feet this privilege was manifestly precious. Each of them made eager room—but not too much of it—beside her. Regretfully, however, Sam shook his beautiful head. Peter laughed again. He had seen Sam's glance move toward the dark girl in white; he had seen the momentary lift and joining of Sam's eyebrows and had read the thought behind it.

Peter knew that this had been a generous thought. Sam didn't like the idea of depriving the dark girl of a share in the pleasure he was giving to these others. As yet, with her back toward him, her attention practically wasted on a mere ocean, she wasn't even aware of his intoxicating nearness. Manifestly Sam thought this wasn't fair; manifestly he decided to deal justly with the girl, even though she hadn't watched and waited, like the others, for his coming.

AT THESE others he waved a gracious, promissory hand and moved, still treading buoyantly, toward the brown-sugar smoothness left by the retiring tide. Upon this he ran back and forth, striding nobly, his feet magnificently arched, his teeth aflash, his attention patently upon his exercise and wholly unconcerned with the dark girl in the white swimming suit.

Peter Olney was pleasantly amused. He thought of peacocks, of turkey gobblers, of small boys who stood on their heads, and he felt agreeably old and wise and cynical. Watching the dark girl, he decided that he had been right in his guess about her. There had been a reason for her choosing solitude, and this was it. Peter nodded approvingly. Her technique was a lot better than Sally Farren's or Helen Lane's. When this parade was over she'd have Sam Ludlow all to herself.

Peter wished her luck. He liked intelligence. People who knew what they wanted and how to get it always stirred a sense of fellowship in him, because he was like that himself and knew how hard it was to keep your mind awake and on its job instead of letting your reflexes run you. He watched the girl with a mounting approval. She continued to inspect the ocean, to be unaware of Sam. Presently she even turned her back to the sun and rested her forehead on interlaced fingers. Peter grinned. She knew her stuff, all right. These were the right tactics for Sam Ludlow.

He saw them work. Sam stopped running. He came toward the girl; he dropped to the sand beside her.

Peter Olney laughed. He turned away. It was easy enough to guess what else was going to happen to Sam Ludlow, and Peter Olney wasn't interested. Any girl who wanted Sam, he told himself cynically, deserved to get him. He was still smiling at the cheerfully malicious thought when a loud hand slapped a peeling shoulder blade and Sam's voice, earnestly gracious, addressed him:

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"Come on over, Old Man, and meet Nora Finley."

Peter grinned back at the beam of Sam's smile. He got to his feet without visible reluctance, although he didn't want to meet Nora Finley or any other girl. Without exception, girls were classified as Unnecessary Risks for a young man who had to live on a thousand a year, and the cardinal rule of Peter's life was to avoid risks of this or any other description. In this case, however, there seemed to be no graceful way of escape, and Peter made the best of what couldn't be helped, and tried to look delighted as, with Sam's arm on his tender shoulders, he was presented to the dark girl in the white swimming suit.

HE SAW at once that there was no risk here. Nora Finley would see to that, if Peter didn't see to it for himself. She hadn't sent Sam over after him because she wanted to know him; this much he read in the first meeting of their eyes. There was a cool intelligence in her brief, straight glance which denied all interest in Peter Olney as a person, which manifestly considered him only as an instrument or ally.

This girl had brains, Peter told himself again—his kind of brains. She knew exactly what she wanted; she was calmly resolved to get it; she had worked out, cleverly, the ways and means of going after it. Peter approved of this and of her. He felt, somehow, that they were in the same boat, on the same side of things, two intelligent people in a world inhabited chiefly by fools. Birds of a feather, Peter thought, ought to help each other.

"Pete and I were at Calvert together," Sam was saying, his tone somehow implying that it gave him unselfish pleasure to shed this reflected luster upon a fellow being. "Remember that Ithaca trip, Pete, back in sophomore year?"

Peter nodded. He knew that he had been invited to describe the epic magnificence with which that journey had been accomplished. Somehow, though, he couldn't make himself accept the hint.

"I didn't go," he said. "I was feeding eight furnaces that fall and couldn't get away."

"I wish you'd told me," Sam said regretfully. "I'd have been glad to fix it up so you could have come." He turned to Nora. "You see, we had a chance that year of beating Cornell and I got the crazy idea that the whole college ought to be on hand to see it, so I hired a flock of motor-busses and took everybody down." He laughed as if to deprecate that extravagant youth, four long years behind him. "Perfectly absurd thing to do, but it was fun, at that. We hardly minded getting licked."

He remembered other episodes in which, as luck would have it, the rôle of Gentleman Bountiful had fallen to him. Peter's respect for the girl rose steadily as he listened and watched. She did not receive Sam's monologue with the rapt, wide-eyed worship which would have been an old story to him. Instead, her faint, indulgent smile seemed to concur in Sam's own tone of amused apology toward that faraway, flamboyant youth. She *was* clever, Peter thought. Sam was used to girls who too visibly adored him; already Nora Finley's indifference had impressed him as a novelty, a challenge.

She laughed lightly as Sam finished telling how he had "just happened" to introduce polo at dear old poverty-stricken Calvert. Easily, with the same effect of governed nerves and muscles which had attracted Peter's notice, she rose and her glance deliberately forsook Sam and considered Peter.

"I'M CURIOUS to find out whether you're really as marvelous a swimmer as they say, Mr. Olney."

Peter couldn't help laughing. This was almost genius, he told himself. Pretending to be mildly bored by Sam's autobiography, pretending to be admiringly interested in an utterly negligible outsider like Peter Olney!

"I'll race you out to that buoy and back." She waved a brown arm at the red cylinder that bobbed in the slow rollers above Half-Mile Ledge.

"Not me, thanks." Peter was emphatic.

"Why not?" The dark eyebrows arched.

"Too dangerous," Peter said. He watched her, now, with a closer interest. He judged people by the way they reacted to that word. He saw that he had been wrong about Nora Finley. She was like the rest of them, after all. Like them, she stupidly saw danger as nothing but a beckoning challenge. Her eyes had lighted a little, her face was eager.

"Is it?" She laughed. "All right, then. Let's go."

Peter shook his head. "Not me," he said again. "I'm afraid."

"Pete doesn't believe in taking chances till he has to." Sam used the voice of one who, himself splendidly lion-hearted, can afford to be generous toward those of less valiant spirit. "It's really a pretty tough swim, Nora. It takes just about all I've got to come in against the ebb. We'll be good and tired by the time we've done it."

Nora's eyes held steadily to Peter's.

"Aren't you coming? Really?"

He shook his head again.

"Then you honestly think you mightn't be able to make it?" She glanced out toward the buoy. "It can't be more than a mile or so, there and back, and I've often done two. Can I do it, do you think?"

"Probably," Peter said. "Plenty of 'em do."

"And yet you say you're afraid?"

"That's it." He followed her thought and his opinion of her sank a little lower. She thought there was something fine and splendid about facing a danger in which you didn't really believe. If he had told her that he was seriously in doubt of his ability to get back alive she wouldn't blame him for staying ashore; if he had convinced her that there was a real risk for her in trying it, she wouldn't think of going. But because she believed there wasn't any real danger, she would try; she was just as stupid, after all, as the others; she meant to let herself in for a long, dull, tiresome struggle with the ebb, knowing that she was risking nothing except fatigue, and yet she admired herself for doing it and despised Peter for refusing to come along.

This was the kind of stupidity which Peter chiefly loathed—the self-deception that dressed up a sham adventure as a real one, knowing all the time that it was only make-believe.

"Come on, Nora," Sam laughed. "It's no good arguing with Pete. He always means what he says."

SHE turned away. Peter looked after them, grinning, as they ran down toward the creaming surf, Sam spurning the sand with the rebounding toes of one who, racing gladly into danger, still remembers his duty toward the spectators. It occurred to Peter that for once the danger was real and near, but he told himself, chuckling, that it wasn't in front of Sam. It ran beside him.

Peter watched them only long enough to make sure that the girl swam brilliantly. When he saw her again, that afternoon, playing doubles at the Tennis Club and rather possessively partnered by Sam, he knew a good deal about her. The Finleys had owned the big, gray-stone cottage on the Point until 1929; they hadn't owned much of anything since. Nora was spending this summer with the Worrells, people from the social haze of the Middle West, who were still barely inside of Narrow Harbor's outer circle. It wasn't hard to guess why they had invited Nora, or why she had accepted the invitation.

Peter didn't let her presence distract him from the tennis lesson which was part of his daily duty toward young Jimmy Randall. Jimmy's mother wasn't a specially exigent employer, but a summer job that paid five hundred dollars over and above all expenses was rather important to a man who wouldn't earn more than a thousand in the other ten months of the year and, with Mrs. Randall on the club veranda, Peter didn't intend to run any risk of giving her the idea that his mind wasn't on his business. He kept his attention firmly on the task of improving Jimmy's sloppy backhand, but he was aware, without once looking in her direction, that Nora Finley was watching him. He was almost expecting it when she stopped and spoke to him on her way back to the clubhouse.

"IT WASN'T so much of a swim," she said. "What made you say it was dangerous?"

"We probably have different ideas about danger," Peter said.

She frowned. "That's not the answer. I wish you'd tell me. I hate riddles."

Peter glanced at the veranda. "I'll explain it for you sometime," he said. "Right now I can't."

"All right. I'll be at the club dance tonight."

She went on toward the steps where Sam Ludlow waited for her. Peter didn't bother to tell her that he wouldn't be at that dance. A measure of his first respect, however, had returned. She had sense enough, at least, to understand that there was something different about the timidity to which he had confessed. Most girls would have dismissed him, on his own evidence, as nothing but a rather cautious coward. This one, at least, knew better than that. He'd been right in

(Continued on page 45)

Illustrated by Clark Agnew

Peter steered for the French windows that opened on the terrace

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"To take him home is just what I'm waiting to do," Amy agreed tartly. "Come along, Ernest"

Gallows of Chance

By E. Phillips Oppenheim

Illustrated by T. D. Skidmore

The Story Thus Far:

CECIL BRANDT is to be hanged, for murder. One man alone can intercede for him: England's young Home Secretary, Sir Humphrey Rossiter. He refuses to do so. The evening before the execution, he is kidnapped. Four masked men seize him, rush him to a mysterious house, place him on a gallows. "Promise," says the spokesman, "to grant that reprieve—*or die!*"

Sir Humphrey will not promise. Informed, however, that Brandt's wife has new evidence, he agrees to listen to her. Released, he meets Katherine Brandt, hears her story, promises to grant a reprieve. Then—after the woman has left—he collapses. Hours later, he comes to. *Cecil Brandt has been hanged!*

Another shock follows for Scotland Yard: Katherine Brandt and Sir Humphrey mysteriously disappear! . . . Three operatives—Inspectors Smithers and Simpson, and Detective Pank—go to Norfolk County, where (following a visit to Lord Keynsham and Lady Louise, his sister) Sir Humphrey had been motoring, in a hired car, when the kidnapping occurred. They hope to find: (a) the house of mystery; (b) the man who had driven the hired car; (c) the "hangman"—a hideous fellow, who had worn a paint-splashed gray suit; (d) some trace of the four abductors. . . .

Detective Pank works alone. Renting a room from his uncle, Elijah Pank, in Norwich, he presently learns that one "Tom Bowhill"—very nervous, very secretive—had roomed at his uncle's at the time of Sir Humphrey's adventure. A rare bit of luck if Bowhill is (as he suspects) the much wanted chauffeur! More luck follows. At a "pub" he sees a man enter—an extremely ugly rascal, wearing an old gray suit, splashed with white paint! He meets the newcomer—one Humble—lends him money, pays for his drinks. Mr. Humble informs him that he is "thinking of branching out in a new line." From the landlord Pank learns what that "new line" is—and is delighted. . . . Within a few days, Pank is in possession of the following additional facts: (a) Tom Bowhill, a chauffeur once employed by Lord Keynsham, has fled to Canada; (b) at the time of the abduction, three men from London—gentlemen, very liberal—had occupied rooms at the Royal Hotel, in Norwich; they had been out very late *one* evening. . . . To win her confidence, Detective Pank is most attentive to Cousin Amy. He gives her a handsome pendant. She is delighted. How little she dreams, as she thanks "dear, dear Ernest," that her cousin comes from Scotland Yard—is matching his wits against the most daring criminals England has ever known!

VII

THE back parlor of the Cat and Chickens was empty and to Amy it was like a chamber in a palace. There was a bright fire burning and the two horsehair easy-chairs, worn at the edges and with broken springs, were drawn up invitingly toward it. As soon as the door was closed she threw her arms around her cousin's neck—her little stream of words was incoherent but there was no doubt about her gratitude. The pendant indeed was more beautiful than anything she had ever dreamed of possessing.

"Ernest, you darling," she exclaimed, as she drew away breathless. "Come and sit down, and pull your chair close to mine. What can I say? What can I do for you?"

Ernest Pank, who was a little carried away, knocked at the wooden door with the end of his stick, and the landlord's smiling face presently appeared. He greeted his client with a beam of welcome.

"Whisky-and-soda, and a glass of port for the young lady," was the order he received.

"Look here, Edwards," he said, "the only way you can avoid trouble is to tell the truth"

"I'll bring them in directly, sir."

The door was softly closed and Pank drew the two chairs a trifle nearer the fire. Amy still hung around him and before they seated themselves she bestowed upon him one more long, fervent kiss.

"Ernie," she murmured contentedly.

He held her in his arms but whispered caution.

"He'll be bringing in the drinks directly. Better sit down while we talk."

She unwound her arms reluctantly.

"How long are you going to stop this time?" she demanded. "And are you going to take me up to London when you go? I'm so tired of Norwich."

"Don't be silly, dear," he said firmly. "I couldn't take you up to London and you know it. What would your father and mother say? Besides, I'm a hard-working man. I wouldn't have time to look after you."

THE door was noisily opened. A familiar figure half lounged, half staggered in. His appearance was less attractive than ever. His flannel collar was crumpled and stained, and his necktie was a disgrace. His clothes looked as though he had slept in them, and the lace of one of his boots was undone. He was pale and unwholesomely moist. His hair, a rusty brown sprinkled with gray, looked as though it had remained untouched by comb or brush for days. He recognized Pank with a wave of the hand.

"Look who's here!" he exclaimed, leaning against the table. "Came back to the little city all right, eh? No place like it. I've been paid for my last job—paid by a gentleman as knows good work when he gets it. What's it going to be?"

"Sit down with us, Mr. Humble," Pank invited. "You're too late this time, as we've already ordered. Another whisky-and-soda," he called through the door which the landlord had left opened.

"Under those circumstances I'll join you with pleasure," Mr. Humble conceded graciously. "I am for the moment in an affluent position, and in confidence I don't mind telling you that in another fortnight's time I expect to be a rich man."

"Fine," Pank murmured. "Wonderful."

Mr. Humble waved his hand.

"Money," he declared, "will never make me proud. I'll drink with you, my young friend, with pleasure. Afterwards we'll see. You and I, the young lady and Harry will each give a name to it. We'll drink to my boss. A wonderful world it would be if there were more like him."

Pank almost shivered with anticipation.

"What's his name?" he asked, with as much carelessness in his tone as he could command.

"Never you mind that, young fellow," Mr. Humble enjoined, patting him on the back. "I'm glad to see you again. You're a gentleman. My boss is a gentleman. I'm a gentleman. But you and I," he sighed—"no good talking—we ain't like him. We're all right, but we ain't the same. You're a lucky young woman," he added, turning to Amy. "Take care of him."

She tossed her head.

(Continued on page 41)

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LET'S GO PLACES

But half the fun in going is going SMARTLY!

LOOK at this smart couple! Stepping out . . . going places. You might think they owned the town . . . but it's just the way you get when you drive the new, bigger DeSoto!

Think we're fooling? All right . . . go get a close-up. Look at the new DeSoto from all angles . . . then tell us how its flowing lines and impressive bigness make *you* feel.

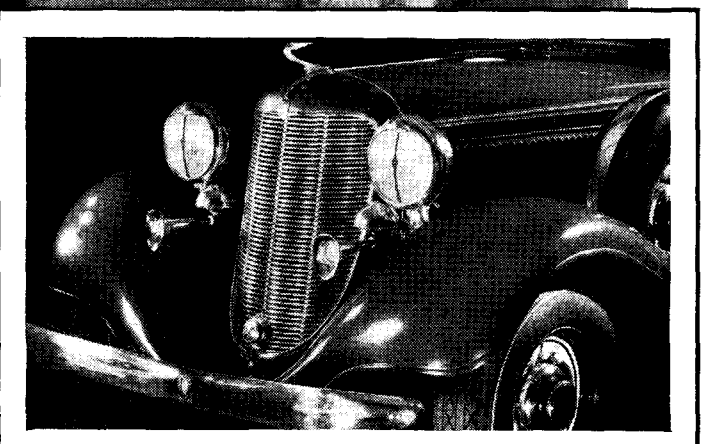
You get excited. You just can't help it. And when you sit inside . . . DeSoto "warms up" to you. Five minutes . . . and you want to drive it home.

You try the back seat . . . with a glad sigh, you sink back in luxury. You like the French-roll cushions, the two-tone mouldings . . . you begin to realize how much bigger this car is. *Your legs have room to stretch!*

Then you want to see what's *new—under the hood.* You find that this amazing car has 79-horsepower, Floating Power engine mountings, an Automatic Choke, Coincidental Starting (there's no starter button, just step on the gas), All-Silent Transmission, Hydraulic Brakes. That's enough to tell you it has *performance*, as well as style.

We ask you . . . just look at it. And take a ride in it! Then you'll know why everybody's calling it "America's Smartest Low-Priced Car!" Just look at these prices!

NEW STANDARD MODELS—Business Coupe $695; Brougham $695; Special Brougham $725; Coupe with Rumble Seat $735; 4-Door Sedan $765. New Custom Models—Coupe $790; Sedan $835; Convertible Coupe $845; Convertible Sedan $975. All prices f. o. b. factory.



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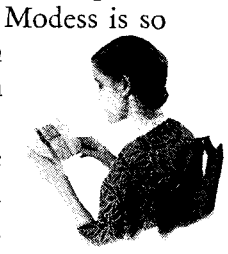
All right, Doubting Ladies ...here's *FREE* proof!

YOU'VE HEARD—your friends, women *everywhere*—praise Modess! . . . Say it's softer, more comfortable, absolutely secure—the *safe* napkin for them! Millions will use no other!

Do you know why? Here's your chance to get FREE proof! In every Modess box, a FREE and extra Modess is now added to show you—plain as plain can be—exactly why Modess is so infinitely superior!

"Oh, I see now why Modess is softer!"

Get this *new* Demonstration Box of Modess. Take out your extra napkin—read the inserted slip. Notice the new-type gauze—the wonderful new kind of filler—the special protective backing. See why Modess is so *much* softer—why it can never chafe!... Learn why you need never fear "accidents" or tell-tale lines! Convince yourself—that till you've used Modess—you've never known what wonderful sanitary protection you *can* have!



"So that's why Modess is more absorbent!"

And *remember*—Modess is America's luxury napkin—yet it costs less!... Less than the regular price of any other well-known brand! Ask your druggist or favorite department store for Demonstration Modess. Save money—and get FREE proof that Modess is the world's finest sanitary napkin!

"This could never show one tell-tale line!"

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NEW BRUNSWICK NEW JERSEY

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costs less than the regular price of any other leading napkin

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John Garner will be the new President's chief adviser on relations with Congress

WHEN Franklin Roosevelt becomes President, Vice President Garner will act as liaison officer between the President and Congress. I do not know any other term to apply to the link between the White House and the Hill than "liaison officer," which nine out of every ten members of Congress cannot pronounce. The very awkwardness of the term typifies the artificiality of the effort to bring about unity of action between the executive and the legislative departments.

The term "liaison officer," so far as Washington is concerned, is borrowed from the late war. The liaison officer between the Americans and the French had to speak two languages and reconcile all the jealousies and antipathies that sprang from differences of race and experience.

This problem of liaison between President and Congress, created when the Constitution set up its system of checks and balances between the departments of the government, has stumped all recent Presidents. Mr. Coolidge tried to solve it by appointing ex-congressmen as his private secretaries, C. Bascom Slemp and Everett Sanders, and by routing the members out to eat buckwheat cakes and sausages at an hour of the morning when they hated to get up.

Mr. Hoover tried to solve it also by having an ex-congressman, Walter Newton, as one of his secretaries. But a secretary is only a secretary, and he becomes by virtue of his appointment a mere part of the executive branch. When you have something against the boss you take it out with special impunity upon his hired man.

Theoretically we have party government, and the party ought to constitute the basis of unity between the President and the majority in the two houses of Congress. To some extent it does. But a party is after all only a combination of minority blocs, and it tends to resolve itself into its constituent blocs in the legislative branch, as the Republican party resolved itself into the industrial and the agrarian blocs in all recent administrations, losing all power to function as a single element in Congress.

Perhaps we came nearer to having party government when big business was in the saddle and its representative, Quay, Hanna or Aldrich, sat in the Senate ruling that unruly body and being listened to respectfully at the White House. But now big business has gone so far downhill that it has to apply to the government for aid to keep it from going into bankruptcy.

The President is spoken of as the head of his party, but he isn't, in any effective sense: he is ordinarily some bland and amiable person on whom a lot of discordant elements have agreed, the greatest, perhaps, common divisor of all the diverse factors that operate politically in this heterogeneous nation.

Our Suspicious Congressmen

So we have had to invent the liaison officer as an instrument of government that the fathers of the Constitution never dreamed of. Hitherto we have had him in the executive branch. This time we are going to have him in the legislative, a far more highly placed, experienced and personally powerful man than we have ever had trying to keep the two allied armies moving toward a common objective.

Besides the lack of unity in parties, another factor makes it difficult for a President and his majority in Congress to coöperate, and that is the jealousy of Congress with regard to its prerogatives, which it always suspects the executive branch of desiring to invade.

No one can understand the mess into which the war-debt problem has been thrown without taking into consideration the extent to which a fight between Congress and the President was involved. Congress resented President Hoover's granting a moratorium as a usurpation of power. And it suspected him of a further usurpation in the form of a promise to Premier Laval of France to readjust the debt settlements if reparations were reduced.

Mr. Roosevelt, wisely so far as his own administration is concerned, perhaps not so wisely for the economic interests of the world, side-stepped this quarrel when he refused to assume responsibility for a debt policy before taking office. His chief adviser as to this course was Speaker Garner, who more than any one else personified Congress in this fight with the President. Mr. Garner was consulted before the answer to Mr. Hoover's invitation was written. And Mr. Garner was the last man Mr. Roosevelt consulted before going to the White House.

So we may take it the Speaker, soon to be Vice President, will be the new President's chief adviser on all relations between the White House and Capitol Hill. As liaison officer he will have good connections in the House, where he has spent thirty years and where the machine will be largely made up of men of his own selection. And among the Democratic members of the Senate there will be nineteen former members of the House, who have served with Mr. Garner.

But the Senate has traditions of its own, one of them being that the Vice President is nothing more than a neutral presiding officer. It is true that Vice President Dawes did influence the course of legislation occasionally. But he was probably permitted to do so because he operated rather against than with the President. Mr. Garner will have to use all his diplomacy, all his talent for warm personal relations, to avoid being charged with aiding in a transgression of legislative prerogatives.

On the whole the chances of party government for the next two years are good. Mr. Garner as adviser of the new President knows the temper of Congress. In the Senate the Democrats have such a majority that Mr. Roosevelt will be independent generally of Huey Long, Costigan, Bone of Washington and the other more radical Democratic members.

There will be enough regulars to put through whatever program Mr. Roosevelt may develop. Anyway no such schism has as yet appeared in the Democratic ranks as that which for decades has made it impossible for the Republican party to function in the upper house.

Happy Days Ahead

The threat of a division between the industrial element and the agrarian element, of course, exists, for that is fundamental in American economic life. But, at least while the new President has patronage at his disposal, opposition in his own party will not show itself.

Mr. Roosevelt begins by declining Mr. Hoover's invitation to "dictate to Congress." I use his own words. He is an amiable personality who will do his best to get on with the jealous people on the Hill. He is a clever politician, probably as clever a politician as Mr. Coolidge was, with much more personal charm and much more skill as a public showman.

With our complicated system of "equal and coördinate" branches of the government we oscillate between periods when Congress asserts itself and periods when Presidents assert themselves. With the new President refusing to dictate to Congress and with his liaison officer and chief adviser on relations with Congress a man who has for a year been the protagonist of the independence of Congress and who is imbued with the spirit of Congress, we may have an administration in which the balance will swing toward the Hill.

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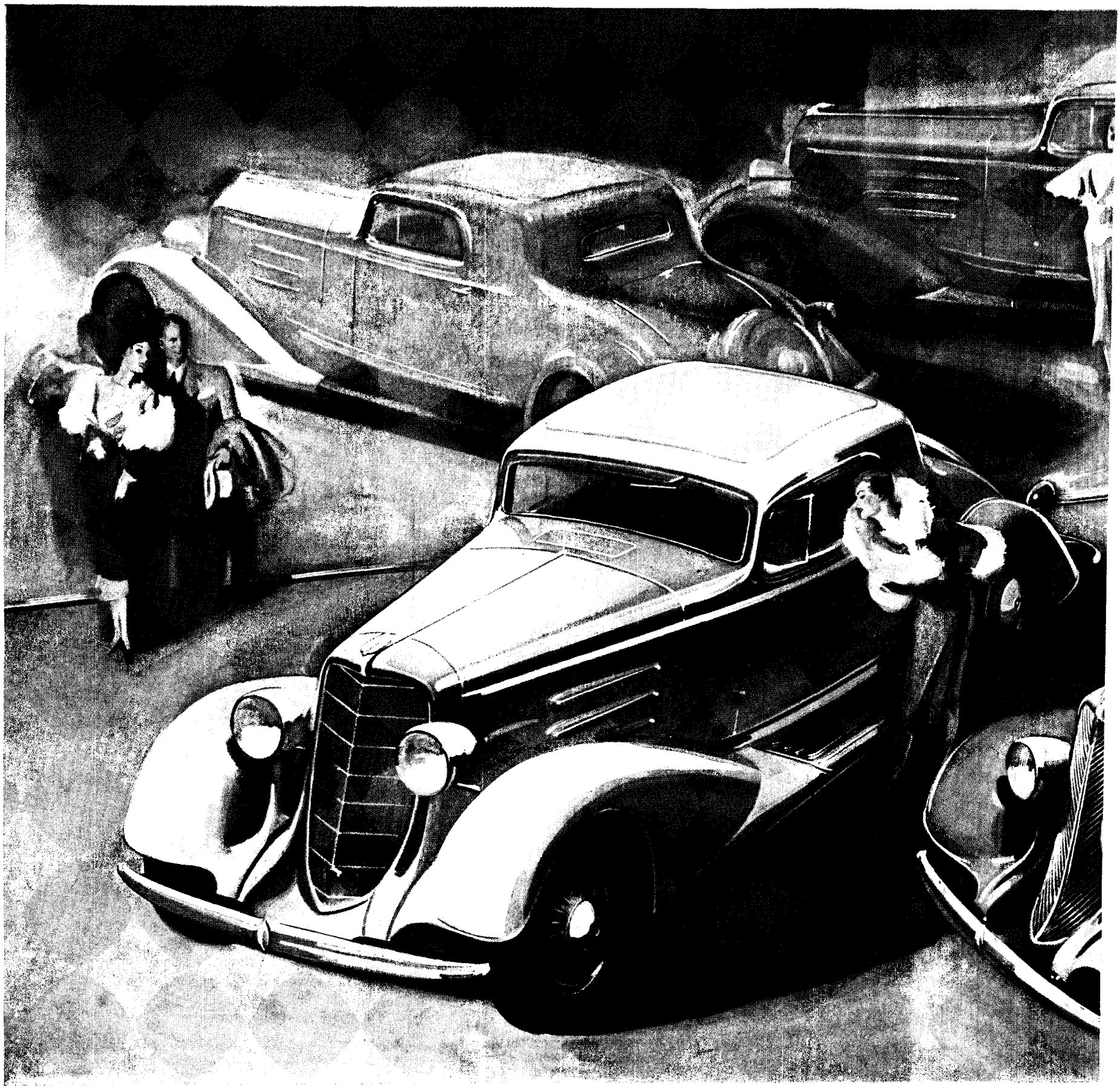

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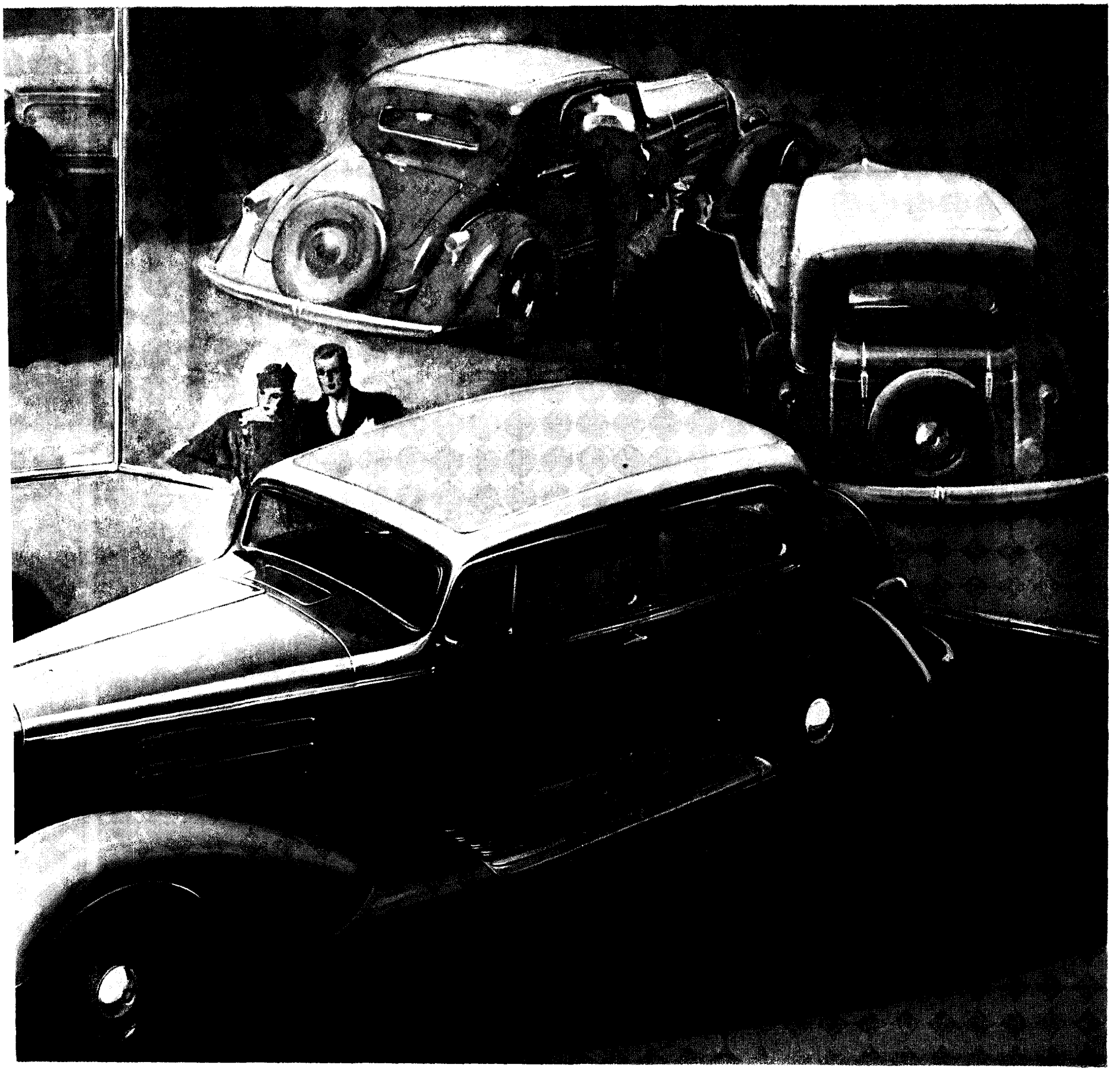

At the left, the New Six—right, the New Straight Eight.

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Words and Music

By Henry F. Pringle

"Rodgers and Hart" on a program means something as definite as "Haig and Haig" used to mean on a bottle. Perhaps you saw the movie, Love Me Tonight, and wondered at the quality of the songs. The answer is: Music by Rodgers, words by Hart. Here's how they get together

Paramount

Claudette Colbert and Jimmie Durante in a scene from the motion picture, The Phantom President

THE Broadway producer chewed vigorously on his extinct cigar, a process which heightened his musical appreciation, and listened critically as a pianist pounded out the tunes. A show called Winkle Town was being offered for production.

"Nope, it won't do," he said at last to the two dark-haired, nervous young men who waited for the verdict. "The lyrics could be fixed, but the music's no good."

Several months passed. A second producer also chewed on an extinct cigar and closed his eyes while several numbers from the same show were sung to him.

"The music ain't bad, but the lyrics are dead," he ruled.

This was about ten years ago. Innumerable other theatrical magnates delivered themselves of similar verdicts, to the profound disgust of Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, who were, respectively, the composer and lyricist of Winkle Town. They accepted the inevitable and gave their attention to brighter hopes.

By 1926, with four shows running concurrently on Broadway, they had become celebrities of the musical comedy world. By 1932 "Rodgers and Hart" on a song was as significant as "Haig and Haig" on a bottle back in the days when labels were labels and not pretty counterfeits. The two were credited with having evolved a new and higher type of musical comedy. They were the Gilbert and Sullivan of the U. S. A.

Producers Like to Play Safe

But the seeds of their success had been present, all the time, in the show which the Broadway managers spurned between 1922 and 1924. The first Rodgers-Hart hit was the Garrick Gaieties of 1925. Two of its most engaging songs had been lifted bodily from Winkle Town. Out of eleven songs in that supposedly worthless offering Messrs. Rodgers and Hart have already salvaged nine and expect ultimately to use the other two. They were played by dance orchestras throughout the country and launched into the air from a hundred radio stations.

The managers who rejected Winkle Town had sound precedent behind them. It costs a moderately large sum to stage a musical show, and the average producer believes in playing safe. He wants tunes which sound as much like the song hits of yesteryear as the plagiarism laws will permit.

He yearns for lyrics replete with such rhymes as "love," "above" and "dove," or "moon," "June" and "swoon." He demands a plot in which the Handsome Hero (tenor) arrives in Bulgravia on a walking trip and falls in love with the Village Maiden (soprano). She reciprocates his passion (duet at this point) but her angry father (baritone) insists that she marry the local elderly Rich Man (second baritone). The situation clears up in time for the final curtain, when the Handsome Hero reveals that he is the Crown Prince of Czechogavinia in disguise. A couple of Jewish comedians appear and disappear at regular intervals throughout the show and the producer assures himself that all this is Good Box Office.

Such was the case, at all events, when Rodgers and Hart were attempting to find a backer for Winkle Town. Their own conception of musical comedy was more cerebral. They believed that the songs and the music could be fresh and original, that satire could be substituted for broad burlesque, that novelty did not, in itself, invalidate a plot. And they suffered, therefore, the usual woes of pioneers. Curiously enough, the Theater Guild of New York, an erudite organization which has small interest in advancing musical comedy, unwittingly enabled Rodgers and Hart to achieve fame and fortune.

An integral part of the Theater Guild, in 1925, was a school for acting called the Junior Group. The primary interest of the young men and women who belonged may have been in perfecting themselves for the sermons of Bernard Shaw and the loquacities of Eugene O'Neill, to which the Guild was dedicated. But they had their lighter moments, too, and during one of these they decided to put on an entertainment for the edification of their elders.

A Surprise for All

They worked up some parodies on the current Theater Guild productions and wrote several additional skits. Then someone suggested that music and songs would not be out of place; no chance of payment existed and who could be persuaded to write them? A friend of a friend of a friend of one member of the Junior Group had heard about the struggling Rodgers and Hart and the excellence of their music and lyrics. They readily agreed to work for the informal production and started by borrowing two of their songs from the abandoned Winkle Town.

Wide World

Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart

The Theater Guild's bright young people planned to give their show for a single performance, on a Sunday afternoon in April, 1925. It was received with such enthusiasm that it had to be repeated on the following week. Then some director of the Guild concluded that special matinees could be given and the New York critics were invited to the first of these. The pundits of the metropolitan press declared that the Guild's precocious offspring had put on one of the best revues in decades and the final result was regular production and the name, Garrick Gaieties.

Other songs and skits had been added

(Continued on page 44)

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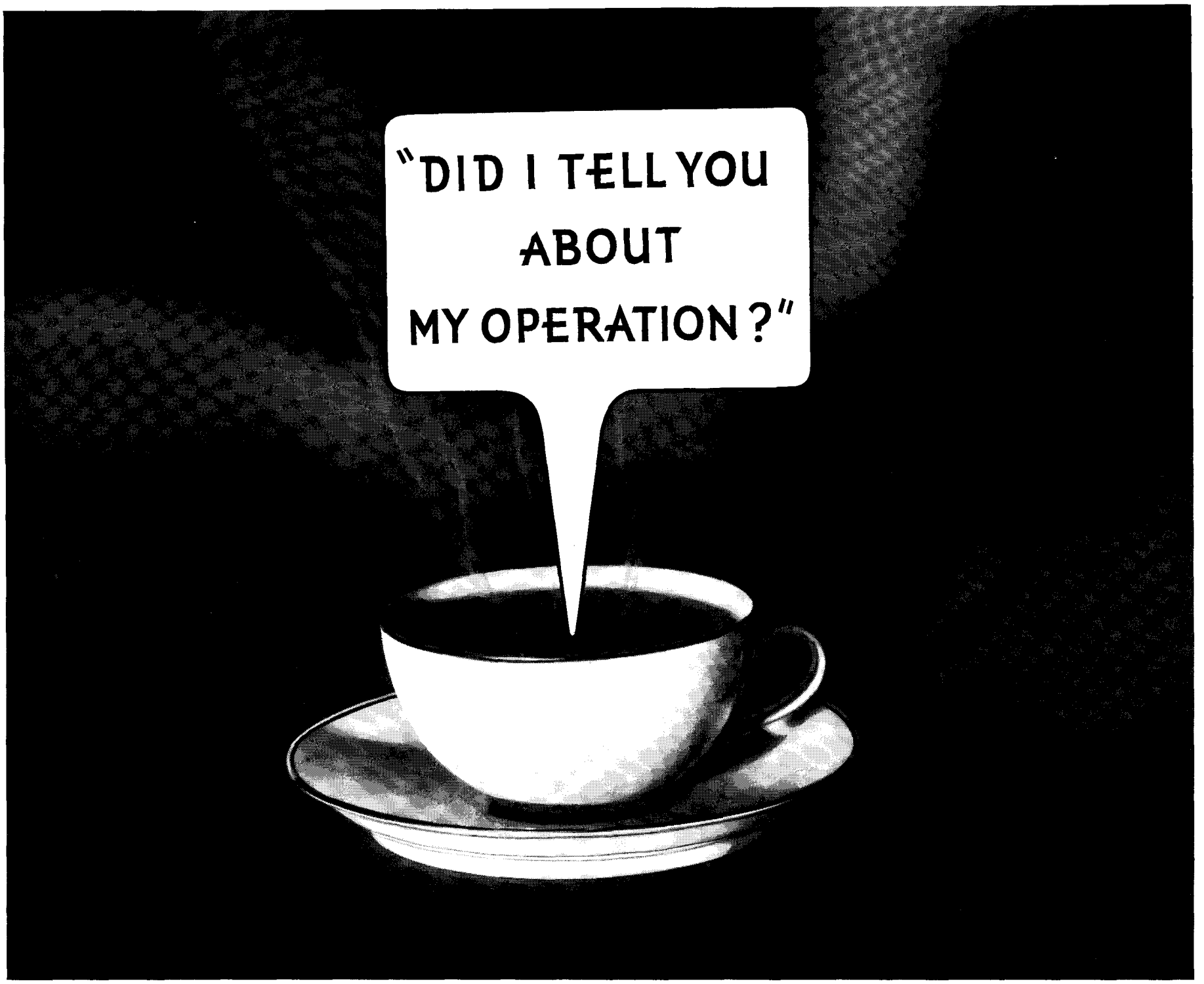

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Sanka Coffee

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The Tammany Take

Continued from page 8

Rorke, cashing the corporation's check as usual, passed over $16,500 in real money to the Olvany firm.

Others than Judge Olvany were keenly alive to the rich possibilities of the Board of Standards and Appeals. Young Master McCooey, for instance, the Brooklyn boss' heir-apparent. Senator John J. Dunnigan, now the majority leader of the state senate, practiced before the Board. More notably, however, "Doctor" William F. Doyle. Only a humble veterinarian, yet with the same skilled grace that marked his removal of a stone from a horse's hoof he extracted 496 favorable decisions from the Board, although two thirds of the applications had been turned down when presented by less persuasive practitioners.

"Doctor" Doyle, when pressed, admitted having banked more than a million dollars as a result of his "practice" before the Board, despite the fact that he took most of his fees in cash, and rarely deposited the full amount. Unfortunately, the picture of a sturdy, self-made man cannot be allowed to stand, for the facts seem to prove that he was just a "dummy." Judge Seabury forced him to confess that he split his fees, but the doc spent eighteen days in jail for contempt rather than disclose the "higher ups" to whom he passed his loot. A significant feature of the Doyle case was the energetic intervention of Boss Curry, who got hold of a justice of the Appellate Division by long-distance telephone. Gossip insisted that the reason was to be found in a fear that Doyle would "squeal" if kept in jail, but the more charitable will prefer to believe Mr. Curry's solemn statement that his sole intent was to "test the constitutionality" of the Seabury investigation.

Thar's Gold in Them Boards

"In my opinion," thundered Judge Seabury, "the evidence leaves no doubt that Doyle and Olvany, and political agencies which they represented, were traffickers in political influence upon the Board of Standards and Appeals, and that the millions of dollars which they earned in the barter and sale of this influence were earned at the expense and to the prejudice of the people of the City of New York."

Yes, indeed! Thar's certainly gold in them thar boards! Gold everywhere, in fact, when a Tammany "big shot" is the prospector. Take what happens when the city decides to acquire land for a school site, for park purposes or for subways. The tip is passed out to the "right people," who jump in, buy the property and straightway have its assessed value jacked up five hundred per cent, a thousand per cent and sometimes as high as four thousand per cent. In cases where the land is bought by direct purchase, there is then much jubilation over the fact that the city has managed to get it at the "assessed value."

Condemnation proceedings provide even richer pickings, for Tammany favorites draw down huge fees as "experts," and a horde of lawyers share in the rich booty. These "experts" receive around $100 a day, and the days have a way of drifting by, for in the Chrystie Street widening the bills for experting totaled $124,000.

Needless to say, the auriferous possibilities of this racket were not overlooked by Judge Olvany, and the detailed relation of his connection with a single case will set forth the workings of the system. In May, 1924, Murray Garsson, Inc., bought certain property in the High Bridge Park section for $210,000 and quickly passed it on to the Park River Holding Corporation for a consideration said to have been $360,000. In October the Board of Estimate approved the property for a park site, and the Park River company retained Olvany, Eisner and Donnelly under a contract by which the firm was to receive two per cent on any award up to $360,000, and 20 per cent on any sum in excess of $360,000.

Still invincibly modest, Judge Olvany kept in the background, firmly concealing his employment, and let one Flynn appear as the attorney of record. When the smoke had cleared away, it was found that the city had paid $755,492.79 for the property that had been sold for $210,000 just five months before. Only $25,000 in cash had been "invested." The remainder of the $210,000 was a mortgage. That's the sort of investment everyone seeks and few find. The "cut" was evidently split in more ways than usual, for the Olvany firm, instead of getting $86,298.56 as called for by the contract, only received $33,321. Flynn gave the check to one Berliner, a member of the Olvany firm, who deposited it in his own account.

"Haven't you one with a side saddle?" *Gilbert Bundy*

A $2,000,000 Bargain

The sale of water-front leases is another feature of the Tammany "take" that yields rich returns. Boss Murphy's practice was to lease docks through political dummies, and then sublease them at extortionate prices. It is estimated that his contracts aggregated $30,000,000 at one time.

The experience of the North German Lloyd is interestingly illustrative of the modern practice. Back in 1922 the steamship company desperately needed a pier in Manhattan, and was approached by one "Dave" Maier, an ex-convict who enjoyed intimate relations with Tammany "big shots," particularly Mayor Walker. He told the Germans that the cost would be between $6,000 and $8,000, but later on in the negotiations regretfully admitted that the price had gone up to $25,000, owing to the employment of William H. Hickin, president of the National Democratic Club.

Now it happened that one Jarka had a stevedoring contract with the North German Lloyd that netted him between $40,000 and $45,000 a year. Quietly but firmly, the information was conveyed to the harassed Germans that the people back of Hickin must be cut in on the Jarka contract for 10 per cent. The company rejected the demand, but agreed to raise the cash price to $50,000, and in 1930, eight years after the initial step, finally got the lease. Hickin deposited the check, and then immediately cashed two checks of his own, one for $35,000 and one for $10,000. What he did with the money could never be ascertained, for when summoned he refused to waive immunity.

The reason for the long delay was partly due to bargaining and partly to the fact that the city had to buy the property for the pier. The land was owned by a corporation headed by Colonel Edward G. Carrington, an eminent Republican who wanted, naturally enough, to get the highest possible price. So, like Mr. French and so many others, he took the well-worn path to Judge Olvany's office and retained the firm on a sliding-scale basis of compensation. As always, Olvany remained in the background, operating through the usual "dummy."

The commissioner of docks approved a price of $2,534,412 for the property, but Mr. McKee, a member of the Sinking Fund Commission, waxed unexpectedly obstinate. Instead of a nice, quiet private sale, condemnation proceedings had to be instituted and, owing to the unfortunate publicity, the Carrington interests received only $2,000,000. Judge Seabury estimated the fee at $120,000, but failed to establish the amount received by the Olvany firm, for the Boss took the high ground that all matters connected with clients were sacredly confidential.

Judge Seabury did, however, manage to ferret out these facts: that in ten cases before city boards, and one condemnation case, the aggregate fees were $251,706, of which "dummies" received 18 per cent and the Olvany firm 82 per cent, although never appearing as attorneys of record. Moreover, $120,000 of the Olvany share was in cash, $35,937 in cashier's checks and one check for $24,931 to a member of the firm.

Small wonder so many New York banks go out of business. The Tammany passion for cash is a regular mania, and from "big shots" such as Farley and ex-Mayor Walker once were, down to deputies and chief clerks, all have "wonderful little tin boxes."

Let us now turn to the "assessment racket," another honey barrel with a golden drip. At the present time the assessed values in Greater New York run around twenty billions, and when it is borne in mind that reduction goes entirely by favor, some realization may be gained of the vast field open for exploitation by Tammany "specialists." Here again there is no possibility of estimating the exact "take," but competent authorities insist that between $50,000,000 and $100,000,000 is saved every year by property owners who are wise enough to engage the "right man."

Filling the Tin Boxes

Nothing was ever more hodgepodge, haphazard and shot through with inequality than New York City assessments. One man will get a cut and his next-door neighbor a raise. Forty-nine homes on Fifth Avenue above Fifty-ninth Street gained reductions ranging up to 37 per cent, while out of forty-nine small homes in the Bronx, fifteen receive no cuts at all, and the others reductions between one and ten per cent.

The Radio City building program calls for an expenditure of $200,000,000, yet despite this vast improvement, the land value assessment was only raised 15 per cent. On the other hand, after the erection of the 60 Wall Street building the land value was assessed 129 per cent higher.

A certain piece of property was assessed at $405,000 in 1930. After receiving a cut to $380,000, a twenty-story building was erected. As a consequence, the sum of $30,000 was added to the land value, and then $100,000 was taken off the assessment for the whole, leaving a total valuation of $310,000 for the land and twenty-story structure as against $405,000 when there was no building.

The Tammany system for working this fertile field is complicity itself. The "specialist" goes to some large property owner and enters into a contract to get the assessment reduced. The fee, originally, was one half the cash saving the first year, one fourth the second year, one sixth the third year and so on. This diminishing scale of return, however, appealed to Tammany as wasteful and some master mind worked out a better way. The assessment is now jacked up again the following year, with the result that the "specialist" always draws down a half.

So much for the "higher ups," the "big shots," the specialists and the favorites who "get theirs" in lumps. We will now consider those lesser cogs in the mighty machine, the toilers who fill their tin boxes by patient industry and painstaking attention to detail.

A fat job, that does not take any too much time, is the first perquisite of the district leader; likewise jobs for his family. In May, 1932, the Civil Service Reform Association published a list of one hundred and six Democratic and Republican leaders and their relatives who drew $715,000 from the city without ever taking an examination.

(Continued on page 32*)*

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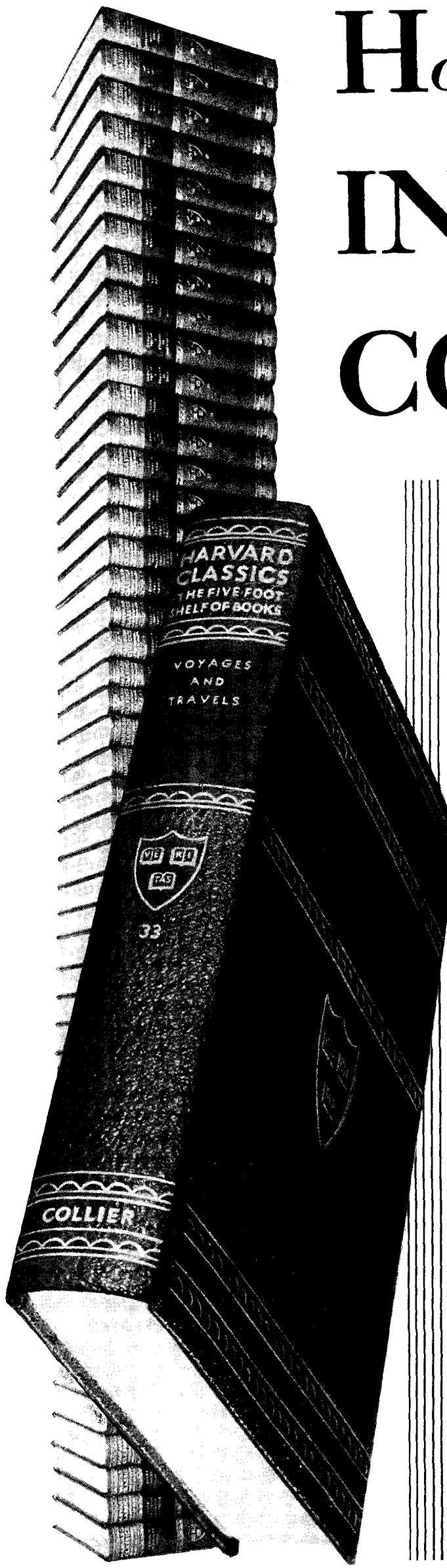

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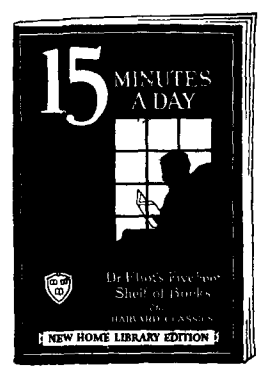

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The Tammany Take

Continued from page 30

Here is a list showing how some of the Manhattan district leaders have looked after themselves:

"Dan" Finn draws $15,000 a year as New York county clerk; Charles L. Kohler, director of the budget at $17,500; Charles W. Culkin, formerly sheriff at $15,000 a year, later an "actuary auditor" at $8,500, now retired; John J. Dietz, commissioner of water supply, gas and electricity, $15,000; H. Warren Hubbard, commissioner of public works, $12,000; John E. Sheehy, sheriff at $15,000 a year; David Lazarus, commissioner of records, $11,000; Walter Fitzsimmons, deputy commissioner of records, $9,000. As for relatives, young Dan Finn is secretary to a Supreme Court justice at $6,500 a year, and Mrs. Mary A. Finn is deputy clerk in the Municipal Court at $4,000. Two Culkins are on the payroll, one at $5,000 and one at $3,000. And so it goes.

A hound on the scent is a study in lethargy compared to a Tammany "leader" after a job. Even a sacred fund, such as New York's appropriation of nine and a half million for unemployment relief in 1931, was not safe from looting. Hundreds of henchpeople, many well-to-do, were put on the lists, and when the scandal broke, Tammany actually made it an occasion for additional graft. The Board of Estimate calmly appropriated $10,600 a month for an "investigation" and appointed one hundred "investigators" at monthly salaries of $140.

An army of jobholders is a Tammany necessity, for it is not only the leader's principal source of political strength, but furnishes an appreciable part of his income. Every district leader operates a "club," and every jobholder is a member, paying for the privilege at a rate that runs from $5 to $7 a member. These clubs also permit the leader to levy effective tribute on the merchants and nonofficeholders of his district, for all have to buy bunches of tickets for various merrymakings and celebrations, and business men are confidently expected to advertise in the "souvenir programs." Chicken feed, perhaps, but it all mounts up to a respectable total in the course of the year.

Side-Line Specialists

A good many of the clubs go in for gambling on a professional scale, being fitted up with "ice-box doors," padlocks, iron bars and "lookouts." The "kitty" is not to be sneezed at by any means, for from papers inadvertently left in the safe of the club operated by Alderman Peter McGuiness it was established that the profit to the house was $14,733 in a little over two months. A pair of bandits also testified that they lost $14,000, the proceeds of a robbery, in the Farley Club and the Perry Club.

There is also a certain amount of outside gambling susceptible to tribute, notably in the Harlem districts where the racket called "numbers" sucks in the savings of almost every black. The "take" of a single banker often runs as high as a million a year.

Virtually every district leader also has a side line that adds considerably to his income. Many dabble in real estate and sell insurance, automobiles, etc. William L. Kavanagh, a district leader of the Third, in addition to the modest stipend of $8,500 as deputy commissioner of the Department of Water Supply, also takes contracts for supplying towels to buildings. As his office has intimate connection with building permits, it may be seen that Mr. Kavanagh does not have to go on his knees to get business.

William J. Flynn, commissioner of public works in the Bronx, turned his rare talents to real estate, and developed a positive genius in getting permits for garages in forbidden territory. To show what patient thrift can do, Mr. Flynn owned only a two-family house in 1918, when he became commissioner, but between that time and 1931 he banked $650,000 and watched his property holdings increase to $400,000.

The Cost of Justice

The best illustration, however, of the manner in which political influence can be brought to bear on business is furnished by Charles W. Culkin, or "Come with Cash Charlie," as he is affectionately known in Tammany circles. Mr. Culkin is a leader in the Third District and in partnership with James J. Hagan, leader in the Seventh, operates the Monroe Lamp and Fixture Company. Only a small concern with a capital of $50,000, yet between 1925 and 1931 it did a business of $5,549,458. Mr. Culkin draws a salary of $15,000 as president, and in six years deposited close to $2,000,000 in his personal account.

"No drum beats for a half hour!
Now for my saxophone practice" *Ira Thompson*

When it is known that Mr. Culkin was sheriff between 1926 and 1929, and that Mr. Hagan was deputy commissioner of the Department of Public Works, the manner in which they induced architects and builders to patronize them is far from mysterious. Judge Seabury, as a matter of fact, put testimony into the record plainly proving that the Monroe Company utilized "its political influence through the various New York City departments, particularly with the Fire Department, to coerce hotels, department stores and other big buildings into buying lamps from them by inferring that their failure to sign a lamp contract with them will bring about action by the Fire Department compelling such concerns to comply with Fire Department regulations.

The Equitable Building, the Commodore, the Biltmore, the Vanderbilt and the Majestic were only a few of the hotels and buildings that suddenly decided to patronize Messrs. Culkin and Hagan, and Gimbel Brothers shyly gave their business to the Monroe Company when it was pointed out to them that they were loading wagons from buildings directly adjacent to a Fire Department engine house. Yes, indeed! When "Come with Cash Charlie" said, "Let your light so shine," it *shone!*

And why not? What if you were an architect or a builder, putting up some huge structure where every day of delay meant thousands of dollars? If an army of inspectors descended on you some morning, picking fault with every item of your material, pointing out scores of minor violations of obscure building laws, would you fight, or would you make haste to find out just what the district leader had to sell, and then beg him for the privilege of signing on the dotted line?

There is still another "take" of the average district leader: his right to name magistrates and judges. These offices sold for from $10,000 to $25,000 back in the days of Croker, but all that is known with respect to modern Tammany practice is that revealed by Hiram C. Todd in the Ewald case. George F. Ewald was named to the bench by Martin J. Healy, leader in the Nineteenth District and shortly after the appointment, Mrs. Ewald handed Healy $10,000. On the stand she swore that she had loaned the money to Healy to "build a house," although Healy was much more well-to-do, but under examination failed to produce a note or even a scrap of paper to support her statement that it was a loan.

There is also the disposition of the twelve new Supreme Court judgeships created in 1931. Democratic and Republican bosses calmly got together, decided that seven should be Democrats and five Republicans, and then entered into a compact by which each party was to endorse the candidates of the other sight unseen. No hint is given as to the considerations that dictated the appointments, but in the case of new municipal court justices in Queens, a candidate was told that he would have to make a "campaign contribution" of $5,000.

It is not only judges and magistrates that the district leader appoints. His is also the right to name assistants to the corporation counsel, who represents the city in civil suits, and assistants to the district attorney, the city's prosecuting authority. These men are members of his club, usually at the clubhouse every evening, an intimate contact that tells its own story of how the district leader is able to play an important part in the decision of cases, especially criminal.

With the "big shots" and district leaders grabbing so large a part of the Tammany "take," it might seem that little would be left for the smaller cogs in the machine. Not at all. The "honest graft" is so huge that there is enough for everybody. Inspectors get their "ten-spots" for overlooking petty violations of the city ordinances; speakeasies are picking for the police, except, of course, the big ones which are backed by a district leader, and the various assistants are always able to turn an honest thousand by exacting gratuities for doing what they are paid to do. James J. McCormick, for instance, is a deputy city clerk who performs marriage ceremonies. Between 1925 and 1931, he banked $384,788 on a salary that averaged $6,000 a year, and while invincibly reticent concerning half of his more than $300,000 surplus, admitted that $150,000 was tribute from bridegrooms.

No one, not even "dub" relatives, are kept away from the trough. Take the case of Dr. William H. Walker, "Jimmie's" stodgy brother. In addition to having drawn $6,500 as a medical examiner of the Department of Education, and other sums as medical examiner of the City Pension Retirement Board, he interests himself in municipal employees who suffer injuries. By virtue of his pull, he threw all of the city's compensation work to four doctors, who collected $216,000 for their services in exactly four years. "Brother Will" admitted splitting fees with the favored quartet, but stoutly denied that these splits were in connection with city cases.

Quick Sales and Large Profits

To their credit, however, the "docs" certainly gave the injured men a care almost passionate in its tenderness. One patient was treated 126 times for a mashed finger (at $2 per) and another was sent back and forth in taxis at the city's expense, the bills amounting to $194. Doubtless this poignant concern made them less than accurate in their entries, for in several instances where the injury was described as a hurt foot, the bill said "X-rays for the hand."

And so works the Tammany system, day in and day out, year after year. Nothing for nothing! Payment on the nail and *in cash*. Every approach to the government of the City of New York, legitimate or illegitimate, exacts a toll.

Jobs, contracts, purchases, concessions, surety bonds, fire insurance, assessments, bus franchises, permits, gambling, speakeasies, pier leases, condemnations, etc., etc.—everything is grist to the busy Tammany mill. Quick sales and large profits. And *no* dissatisfied customers, for heaven help the guy that lets out a squawk.

All "honest graft." At least no important Tammany man ever goes to the penitentiary, and there is no reason why one should, with Tammany in control of the district attorney's office and the county courts. Of course, there was Connolly, who got caught selling defective sewer pipe, but then he was in Queens. A yokel who didn't grasp the beauty of fees or the importance of standing squarely on your constitutional rights when called before a grand jury. What if you do have to swear that an answer would tend to incriminate you and degrade you? Who cares? No New Yorker, that's certain.

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In the Viceroy's Villa

Continued from page 13

smooth, sleek, overcorpulent man—was hot and dusty from his tour of the rich realm which he ruled; but instead of retiring to rest, he went into the palace garden and sent a messenger in search of Señor Alonzo Matenza.

Señor Matenza was a hunchback lawyer of Lima whose delicate skill in the subtle art of flattery had made him Gonzalvo's most privileged crony. When the lawyer had taken his seat and had felicitated His Excellency upon his return to his capital, the viceroy came to the matter uppermost in his mind.

"You have heard," he said to Matenza, "of Perez's latest exploit?"

The hunchback nodded his head. "But who is this girl?" he asked.

Don Gonzalvo's small eyes glittered as he poured himself another cup of wine.

"It makes an interesting story," he said. "When I was in Piuma almost a year ago, I saw a girl there to whom I surrendered instantly. She was the most alluring creature that I have ever beheld. Perez, who commanded my escort on that journey, investigated and found that the affair presented difficulties.

"It seemed that the girl lived with her uncle in the country near by. They were not rich, but she was the most important person in all that district—nothing less than a Daughter of the Sun, as the ancient Peruvians called their princesses of the royal Inca line.

"WELL, I was much taken with this Curi Coylure, this Daughter of the Sun, but because she was a princess in the minds of the people of Piuma, I had to be careful. Perez discovered, moreover, another complication. Curi Coylure was to marry a young man who, although he too was poor, was almost as important a personage as she, because he also was of royal Inca descent. His name was Manco. Just as the girl was a princess to the people of Piuma, this young Manco was a prince, and Perez said that the people looked forward eagerly to the marriage of these two royal lovers and hoped secretly that it might in some mysterious way free them from Spanish rule.

"So you see, Matenza, I had to be cautious; the usual methods could not be employed. It was Perez who suggested the scheme which I adopted.

"I went to Curi Coylure, not incognito but wearing the viceregal insignia, told her that I had been completely captivated by her beauty, and that out of this love a great idea had been born.

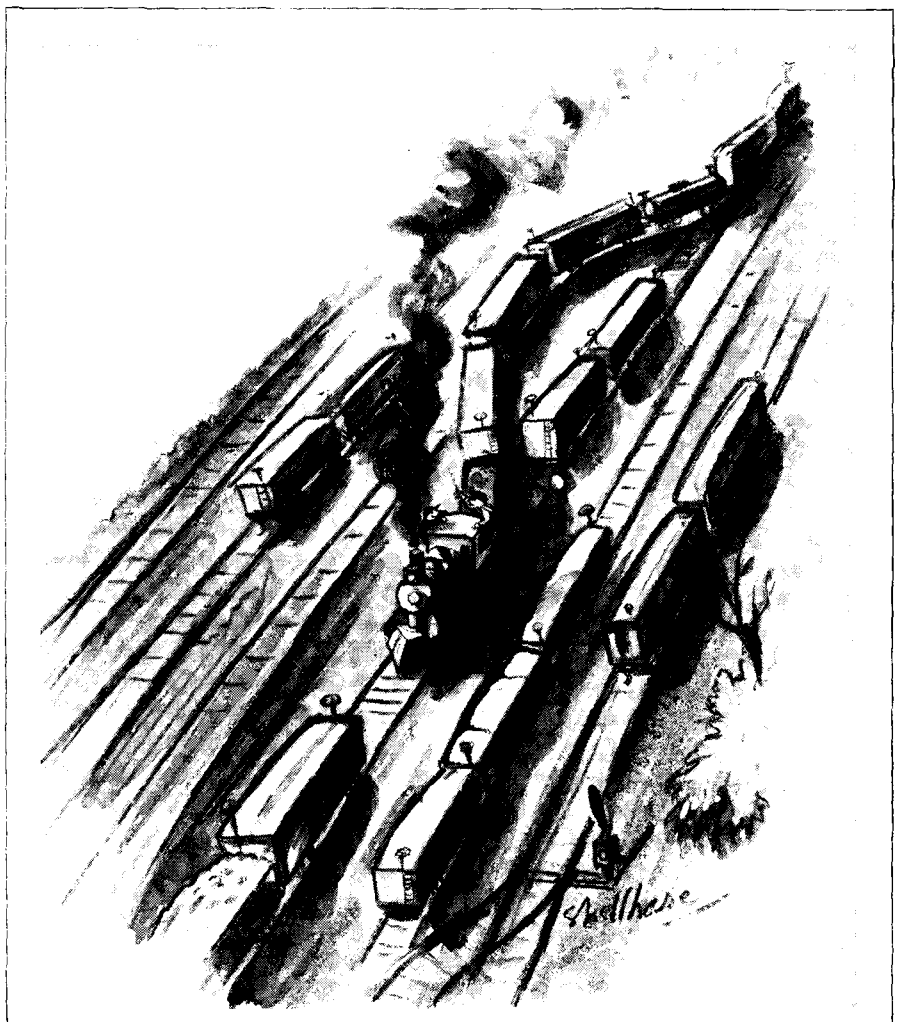
"I told her that I had long wished to make Peru free from Spain and that in her I saw the means by which this might be accomplished. If she, a princess of the royal Inca blood, would become my bride (my bride!—think of it, Matenza!) we could unite the native and Spanish elements in Peru and set up a new empire like that of the Incas in which the native Peruvians would have equal rights with those of us who came from Spain.

"How was that, Matenza, for a stroke of genius? It was, as I said, Perez who suggested it, but you must give me credit for making so preposterous a fantasy sound plausible. Well, Curi Coylure did not swallow the bait at once. In fact, she flatly rejected the proposal, thinking, no doubt, of her lover Manco. But I could see that it had impressed her—that she was thinking also of what it might mean to her people. Finally I left her with the most ardent protestations of my love, urging her to consider what I had said and, if she decided favorably, to send me a message here in Lima.

"The months went by and no message came, and I had almost forgotten the incident. Then, just before I started on my journey four weeks ago, a messenger arrived from Piuma with a letter from Curi Coylure. It was brief. 'Excellency,' it said, 'I shall come when you send for me.' I was about starting on my tour, so I entrusted the matter to Perez. He went to Piuma alone.

"Perez found that Curi Coylure and Manco had quarreled. He found, too, that the girl had convinced herself that I was in earnest in my proposal to her and that it was her duty to help found the new empire so that the glory of the Incas and the rights of her people could be restored. Perez got her secretly out of Piuma and had her safely on board a small ship bound up the coast for Lima before she repented. The rest of the affair—how Perez saved her from the pirate, Captain Africa—you know."

Don Gonzalvo, the Fox of Lima, poured another cup of wine for himself and then refilled his companion's gob-



"You and your short cuts!" *George Shellhase*

let. He smiled—a cruel, sneering smile which revealed suddenly, as though a mask had been dropped, the brutality of his face.

"We shall have a little supper," he said, "at my villa tonight. You, Matenza, shall bring the Condesa, and Perez can bring Mariquita the dancer. The Princess Curi Coylure will preside and we shall drink to her new Empire of the Incas."

"You had better look out for that fellow Manco," said the hunchback Matenza dryly. "And if Perez will take my advice, he will keep his sword sharpened against the day when he meets Captain Africa again."

TWO horsemen, excellently mounted, rode out of Lima by the Rimac gate two hours before midnight and took the great highroad leading to Cuzco, the ancient city of the Incas. The one in the lead, a tall man in buff jacket and boots, with a long sword swinging at his side, had the appearance of a somewhat needy soldier of fortune. The other, slighter and not so tall, wore the rough garb of a muleteer. Despite the lateness of the hour, they seemed to be setting out on a considerable journey, since the muleteer was leading a spare horse.

THEY did not, however, travel far along the Cuzco road. Within a few miles of Lima, they turned into a side road winding among the hills and thence into an obscure bridle path which led steeply upward. They followed this for perhaps a mile and halted in a lonely spot on a rocky hillside where an even more obscure footpath, barely discernible in the darkness, descended toward a cluster of lights in the valley below.

Here they dismounted. They tethered the three horses in a small thicket of trees, then returned to the spot whence the footpath led down into the valley. The taller man took two pistols from his sash, examined them carefully and handed one of them to the muleteer, who thrust the weapon into the deep pocket of his jerkin. The tall man seemed perfectly familiar with the surroundings. "Those," he said, pointing down the steep slope, "are the lights of the viceroy's villa. There are only two approaches—the road that joins the Cuzco highway and this footpath. The dragoons are guarding the road and this path may also be watched, but it is our only chance. We must make no noise."

The Viceroy Gonzalvo's villa in the hills outside of Lima had been, before the Spanish conquest, the fortress of a great Peruvian nobleman, a vassal of the Incas. The upper story had been destroyed in the wars so that of the original building only the lower part remained. This was constructed of huge blocks of stone, two feet or more in thickness, and consisted of a large central room into which a number of smaller rooms opened. This lower story of stone had been designed, not for comfort, but for security; it was entered only through one doorway and its massive rock walls had no windows. The habitable part of the house was a sumptuously furnished wooden upper story which Gonzalvo had added.

The viceroy's intimate suppers were always held in the ancient rock-walled central room on the ground floor. Here, under crystal chandeliers, a-glitter with candles, and amid a profusion of gold and silver plaques and bowls taken from the palaces of the Incas, he had spread a Lucullan feast for Curi Coylure. She sat at the head of the table, where the plates were of inlaid silver and the dishes of beaten gold. The hunchback Matenza was at her right, and next to him was the jet-eyed Condesa de Montespayer, resplendent in emeralds. Facing these were the dancer Mariquita, in green satin with silver-mounted aigrettes, and Don Perez de Carbajal, wearing the scarlet uniform of the viceroy's dragoons. The viceroy, in black velvet adorned with the insignia of his rank, sat at the table's foot opposite Curi Coylure.

She had a strange feeling that her real self was sitting apart, invisible, looking on at this ghastly feast—that the richly dressed girl at the head of the table, adorned with lace, was a ghost which had no real existence. That was, in a sense, true. Even as she laughed and talked with the others, her thoughts were of Manco.

Manco still loved her! He loved her in spite of their quarrel! It was this knowledge that sustained her, that enabled her to go through with her difficult part, for Manco, before he vanished in the crowd that morning, had whispered: "Pretend that you are happy with the viceroy—and be ready when I come."

THE two liveried Negro servants had cleared away the last course. They had left the room with their dishes, passing along a short corridor leading to the kitchen. There was a sudden shuffling of feet in the corridor, followed by a noise as of the sliding of a bolt. Don Perez de Carbajal rose quickly from his chair. "That was the kitchen door!" he exclaimed. Simultaneously, in the doorway opening on the corridor, two men appeared—a tall bronzed man, whose buff jacket and sword were those of a soldier, and a man in the leather jerkin of a muleteer.

They stood in the doorway, directly behind Gonzalvo, each with a leveled pistol in his hand. Curi Coylure's lips framed the word "Manco!" Perez de Carbajal, staring at the tall man in the buff jacket, exclaimed with an oath, "Captain Africa!"

Captain Africa's pistol was aimed at Don Perez's breast; Manco's weapon covered the viceroy, who had half turned in his chair and was staring at the intruders. "If you move, Perez," Africa said quietly, "you are dead. If the viceroy rises from his seat, Manco will kill him like the dog that he is."

Perez de Carbajal, standing rigid beside his chair, made no reply. There was no sound except the quick breathing of the women. The hunchback Matenza had gone suddenly white. The viceroy's full-blooded face had become a purple-red.

"The tables are turned, Perez," Africa continued affably. "I have you now where you had me in the cabin of the Santa Anna. Your sentry guarding the footpath is dead. The two servants are locked in the stone kitchen. You

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dragoons in the road outside cannot hear through these thick walls. We shall shoot you and the viceroy instantly if you do not all do what you are told. I shall ask your hunchback friend and these two ladies to retire through the door at your right into the small room there. At once, Señor Hunchback!"

Matenza rose with almost ludicrous haste and hurried toward the door indicated. The dancer Mariquita followed with equal precipitation, her staring eyes never leaving Africa's face. The Condesa de Montespayer smiled.

"Shall I do as he says, Perez?" she asked calmly.

Don Perez nodded. The Condesa, still smiling, rose with deliberation and followed Matenza and Mariquita into the small room. Captain Africa jerked his head toward the viceroy.

"It is your turn, dog," he said sternly. "Begone before I change my mind and send you to hell."

GONZALVO, the Fox of Lima, rose slowly. The veins in his forehead swelled and throbbed; his small eyes, fixed upon Manco's pistol, were red with fury. He stood like an animal about to spring, his shoulders hunched, his lips drawn back in a snarl. "Go, Excellency!" Perez de Carbajal exclaimed quickly. "They will kill you." Gonzalvo, muttering incoherently, moved slowly toward the door and disappeared across the threshold.

"Now, Perez," said Captain Africa briskly, "you will close the door behind them and bolt it. In the cabin of the Santa Anna you gave me one minute to make up my mind. I give you half a minute."

Perez de Carbajal walked across the room, pulled the heavy door shut and slid the bolt into place. He turned and faced Captain Africa, his hand on his sword-hilt, his dark features convulsed with rage.

"What next, pirate?" he asked.

Africa's gray eyes were cold as steel.

"Something very important, Perez," he replied: "the settlement of a little score I have with you."

His tone changed suddenly. "Manco," he said, "take the girl and go—up the footpath to the horses. I shall join you there soon."

Manco beckoned to Curi Coylure where she still sat at the end of the table. She shook her head. "We must not leave him," she said.

Captain Africa frowned. "Go, señorita," he commanded. "My business with Perez is not for your eyes." She rose and ran to him and pressed his hand. When they had left him alone with Perez, Captain Africa smiled.

"I have looked forward to this moment, Perez," he continued, "ever since that morning in the cabin of the Santa Anna. They say in Lima that you are the best swordsman in Peru. Now show me what you can do with your blade."

Over Perez's swarthy face spread slowly a look of incredulous joy.

"Fool!" he cried, as he drew his rapier, "you have the game in your hands and you throw it away!"

Captain Africa pursed his lips.

"Perhaps," he said, as the swords crossed.

Perez de Carbajal attacked furiously. His thick-set, powerful body was galvanized suddenly with an amazing energy; his onset seemed as swift, as irresistible as a tiger's spring. Africa's tall, lithe form moved with the lightness of a dancer; he retreated warily, devoting himself wholly to defense.

Captain Africa's smile had vanished. His bronzed aquiline face was grim, intent. Perez read in that strained, fixed look a realization of defeat. "Imbecile!" he taunted, "you thought to match the best blade of Lima! Where will you have it, pirate—through the lung or through the throat?" Captain Africa did not answer. His every faculty, his whole being, seemed concentrated upon the desperate task of meeting Perez's terrific assault.

They circled the large room twice. The bright swords flickered like snakes' tongues; the rasp of steel on steel was like the hissing of deadly snakes. They fought round and round the table in the middle of the room, Perez always advancing, Africa always retreating. A third time they circled the room, and still neither blade had drawn blood. A strange fact, almost too strange to be believed, was forcing itself into the consciousness of Perez de Carbajal. Four times he had tried to send home a thrust of which he was peculiarly a master, and each time Africa's sword had turned the thrust aside. Perez, the craftiest swordsman in a country where good swordsmen were not rare, knew that these four failures were not due to chance.

Slowly the truth dawned on him. Presently the realization came to him that he was engaged with an opponent whose skill equaled his own. A little while longer and he knew that it was worse than this—that, for the first time in years, he had met an antagonist with whom he could not cope. The man was playing with him! Africa's defensive tactics, his swift and continuous retreat, were part of the game that he was playing; that strained, haggard look on his face was deliberately assumed.

For an instant stark terror gripped Perez; then desperately, frenziedly, his cunning brain searched for a plan. For a fraction of a moment his eyes rested on the cocked pistol which Africa had laid upon the table before drawing his sword.

A minute, two minutes passed. The table was now behind Perez and a little to his right. Suddenly Africa laughed. "Enough of fooling, Perez!" he cried. "The best blade of Lima has something still to learn." Perez, still attacking, found himself halted, found himself in retreat before so deadly an offensive as he had never before encountered.

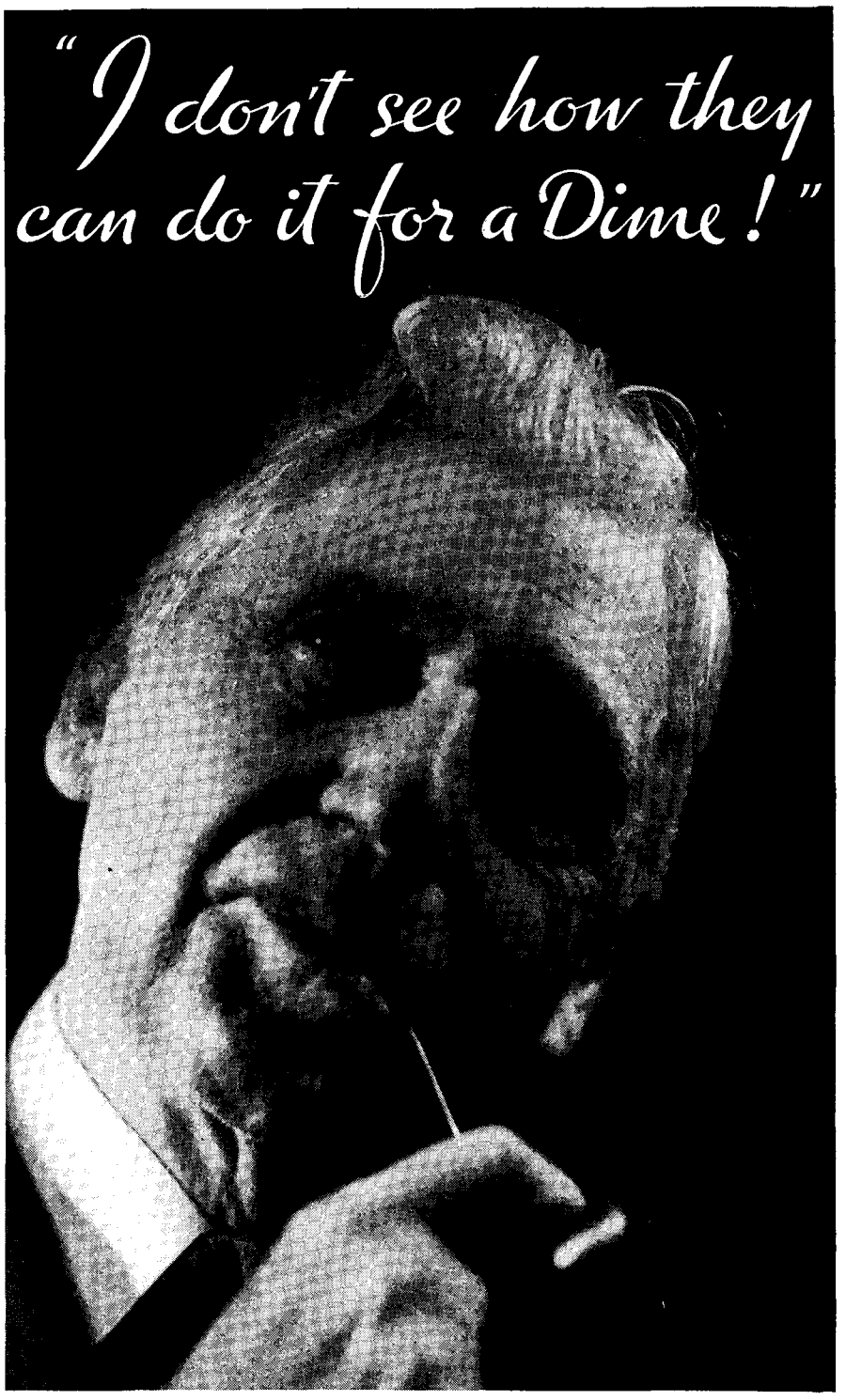
Instantly he did the treacherous thing which his brain had just conceived. He sprang back, dropped his sword, snatched the pistol from the table and fired point-blank at Africa's face. The bullet missed by a hair's breadth. Perez de Carbajal flung his arms high and fell backward as the rapier point pierced his throat.

EVERY night, for three nights past, a longboat manned by six earringed, tattooed seamen had come in from the sea, waited patiently in the darkness near the head of a deserted wooden pier in Callao Bay, and then, before daylight, had pulled silently out to sea again. This night, as usual, the longboat was keeping its vigil. Suddenly, in the utter stillness, the men in the waiting boat heard a clatter of hoofs on the stony roadway leading down to the water's edge.

The hoofbeats came nearer, then ceased. Soon three shadowy forms could be seen walking rapidly along the pier. The longboat moved in to meet them. The three figures on the pier stepped into the boat, which immediately pushed off and headed seaward.

It had proceeded scarcely a hundred yards when again a sound of hoofs was heard on the shore. At the landward end of the pier there was a sudden commotion, an excited medley of Spanish oaths. Captain Africa, standing in the stern sheets of the longboat, spoke to Curi Coylure, sitting beside Manco on the forward thwart.

"A close thing, señorita," he said. "The dragoons have found our horses. If the best blade of Lima had been just a little better, they would have caught us on the road."



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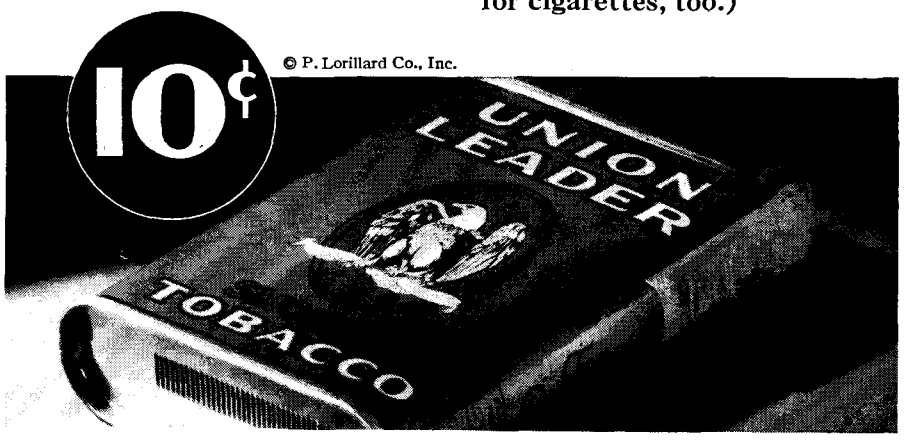

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War Baby's Mamma

Continued from page 15

she couldn't recall what. "Maybe I'm gittin' de phthisic again," she grumbled.

"You didn't miss no wood offn yo' woodpile, did you?" Sissy inquired.

"Naw, I ain't missed none—" The idea persisted and finally it lined up with B'r Charlie! At first the Widow Duck was merely shocked. And then she decided it was no more than one might expect.

"Is de hen gen'mun," she asked, "comin' back?"

"Sho'," said Sissy, "he 'lowed he'd drap over tonight and eat some dumplin's wid me. I got 'em on de fire now."

The Widow Duck laughed slyly. "Not namin' no names," she offered, "but ain't dat hen gen'mun liable to fall over de fence and break his *yuther* laig?"

Sissy wriggled shyly. "I swear, Mis' Duck," she declared, "you sho' guessed him right, de fust time! How'd you know?"

The Widow Duck was serious but she was also amused. "No mind," she told Sissy. "I jest figgered. De Book say, 'Blessed is him which wawks in de light but him dat gropeth in de dark, let him abide therein.' So say de Sperrit!"

Sissy was impressed, although she did not grasp the connection between the hen gentleman and the quoted passage. "Sho' do," she agreed. "War Baby is daid again' B'r Charlie, too. Dat's how come I send him offn de place ev'y time B'r Charlie come. Him and War Baby fit de minute dey sot eyes on each other."

"War Baby don't like B'r Charlie?" the Widow Duck asked. It was the first time she had thought about War Baby since she saw the chicken feathers and believed he had stolen the hen.

"War Baby," explained Sissy, "say B'r Charlie is a rogue and a snake-in-de-grassin' liar, and when I tells him de Good Book say not to jedge, dat boy gits down de natchal Bible and reads to me about de false prophets cryin' in de wilderness. And he say, on top er dat, dat B'r Charlie got a wife and family down on Nigger Chute—"

"B'r Charlie been makin' marry tawk at you?" the Widow Duck asked bluntly.

"Sho'," said Sissy virtuously. "I'm a nice 'oman, and I wouldn't keep company wid no man onless I was fixin' to marry up wid him."

"You fixin' to marry up wid B'r Charlie?"

SISSY twisted uncomfortably before she replied. "Dat's de p'int," she explained. "B'r Charlie want to marry wid me and I wid him. But he want I should give him all de money fust."

"All er what money?"

"Dis money I'm s'posed to be gittin' in de mails."

"Un-hunh."

"You see," continued Sissy, "B'r Charlie is a powerful godly man. So he want me to give him de money I been spendin' on gin so's he kin put hit in de missions."

"What missions?" the Widow Duck asked.

"Jest de missions," said Sissy. "And I told him I'd give jest as quick as I got married. So he told me de Scripture which says I got to repent up wid money fust and den git married."

The full significance of the thing was not clear yet, but the Widow Duck was beginning to understand why she never really liked B'r Charlie.

"But," went on Sissy, "I figgers I better marry up to him, and den tell him about not havin' no money. Er cou'se dat'll be a lie, and a lie's a sin. But I'll have me a husband. And hit'll be bad on de missions on account er I'm not givin' no money, but efn I ain't been spendin' no money on gin, dat'll be good, and sort er cross off de lie, maybe—"

The Widow Duck laughed heartily. "War Baby," she told Sissy, "was tellin' you de natchal about B'r Charlie's wife. He got one and a house full er kids. Dat boy must got some sense, efn you ain't. B'r Charlie was fixin' to rogue you outn dat money and den not marry you."

"Dat boy," said Sissy proudly, "ever was smart. He fixin' to be a preacher when he gits up big. Dat's one thing made me kind er want dat one-laigged nigger. So's he might learn War Baby a little. But," and her eyes flashed angrily, "wait to I lay hands on dat Charlie! I'll bust dat liar's haid."

"HOLD on," soothed the Widow Duck. "Not so fast, honey. Bustin' fo'ks in de haid ain't gonter do no good. Lemme set my brains to thinkin', right hyar and now."

For an hour they discussed ways and means. Several facts were brought out, but no solution. One fact was that it would do no good to denounce B'r Charlie as a thief, because Sissy's reputation was bad and B'r Charlie's was good. Folks would believe B'r Charlie. Nor would it help to lay the matter before Giles, the foreman, because Giles would merely run B'r Charlie off the place and that would cause suffering to B'r Charlie's family, and would help nobody. Sissy's suggestion of taking a butcher knife to the preacher also met with the widow's disapproval. "He'd go to Giles wid a lie," she stated.

"Not efn I got at him," Sissy maintained stoutly. "He'd go to de graveyard. Feets fust."

"And you'd go to jail," Widow Duck pointed out.

"And I'd be eatin', too," Sissy argued, "whilst dat rogue was punchin' chunks."

"And den what'd War Baby be doin'?"

That stopped the plan. Sissy conceded the butcher knife.

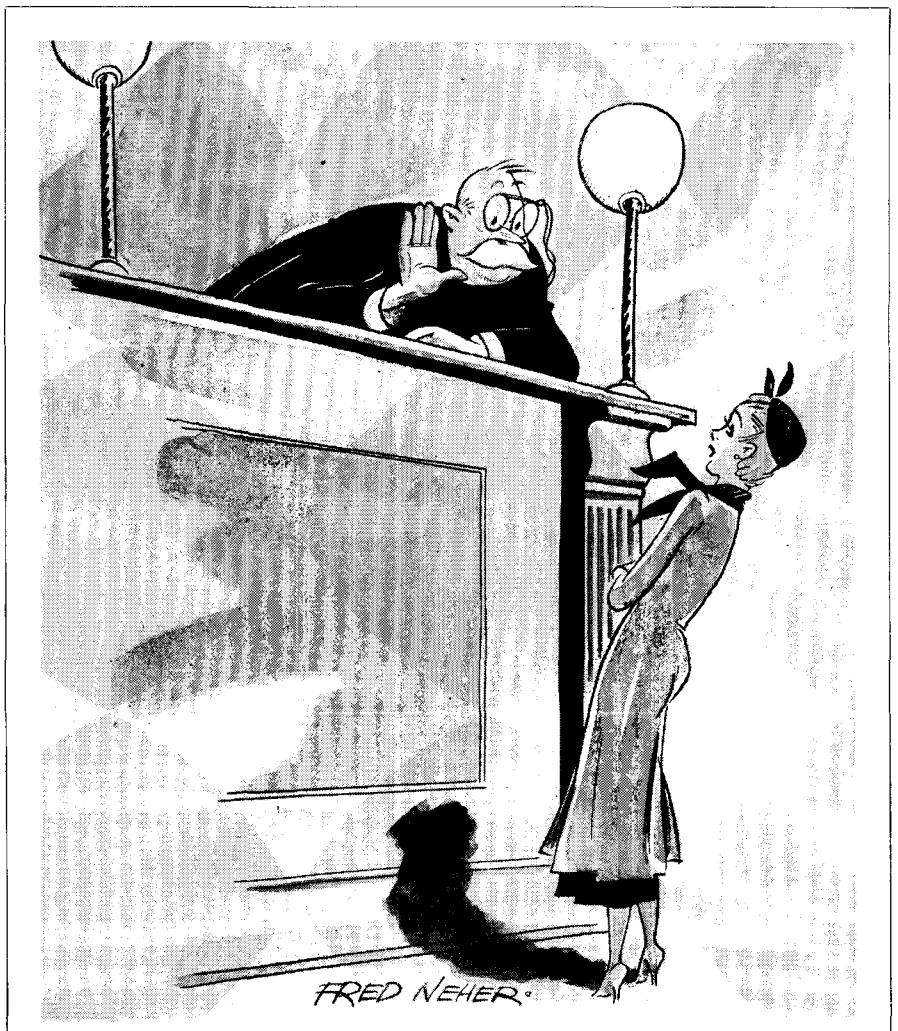
They talked on, though neither could offer a workable plan. Sissy grew discouraged. "Hit's a shame before de Lawd," she grumbled, "for a gal like me to live poor as I do, and dat fat-mouf rakin' in all de money."

"What money?" The Widow Duck had heard more money talk that day than she was accustomed to hear in a month.

"De mission money," Sissy told her.

"Aw," comforted the Widow Duck, "don't fret about dat, honey. Efn you ain't got to give, he *daid* sho' ain't gonter rake hit in."

"I means de yuther mission money," Sissy explained. "I means de money he been collectin' a dime a week f'm might' nigh all de people on de place, all summer. Dat 'mounts up."



"Aw, go on—I'll bet you tell all the judges that!" *Fred Neher*

The Widow Duck herself had contributed occasionally, she recalled, but it never occurred to her that the money fell into B'r Charlie's hands. Money never interested her. She knew people were expected to give money to the Lord, and without ever thinking about it she had supposed that there was some mysterious way in which the preacher passed the money along to the heavenly coffers. Now, with what she had just learned, she felt certain that the Lord never saw a single dime of it! "Ain't dat a shame to do de Lawd like dat!" she exploded.

"Say which?" asked Sissy.

"Say," stated the Widow Duck, "a fool like me ought to met up wid a smart gal like you a long time ago. You got a haid on you long as any mule in de lot. You might not be much to look at but you put on a nice dress and git dat hongry look outn yo' eyes, and you kin marry de best man on dis place, I bet. Honey, you ain't no fool."

The talk was too disconnected for Sissy. "Which?" she repeated.

"No mind," the Widow Duck said abruptly. "You git in de tub and wash up clean. And den put on yo' best—"

"Dis is my best, and only."

"Wash hit out and dry hit by de fire. Den iron hit," the Widow Duck commanded. "Hyar." She untied a narrow band of ribbon from her waist. "Press dis out and tie up yo' hair, too. Wait—you git in de tub. I'll wash de dress whilst you gits clean. Now hustle up before dat one-laigged liar git hyar."

BOTH women worked rapidly. Not only was Sissy's dress laundered neatly, but the cabin was swept clean and the trash in the yard was raked up and set on fire.

"Now," said the Widow Duck critically, "hit look like somebody live hyar."

"Hit sho' do," Sissy nodded enthusiastically. "I likes to keep my house like this, too, but I jest ain't had de heart to do nothin', times is been so tight."

Putting her arm affectionately around Sissy, the Widow Duck told her, "Hit ain't for me to jedge, honey, but efn hit was, I'd say dat you been livin' a lie, makin' out like you got what you ain't."

"Dat what War Baby tell me," Sissy confirmed. "I swear, dat boy is one more!"

"F'm now on," the Widow Duck ordered, "you gonter quit livin' dat lie and live right, onderstand?"

"Hit'll be a pleasure," Sissy agreed. "And de fust thing, I'm gonter open up my heart and tell B'r Charlie what his name is."

"Nawp," objected the Widow Duck. "De Book say, 'Blessed is de hoot owl, 'cause he don't do nothin' but listen, wharfore de fool spilleth his words among de rocks, so let him abide therein.' Now you let dat B'r Charlie do de tawkin' and you play hoot owl."

When dark came, the Widow Duck went inside the house and sat by the door where she could hear without being seen. Sissy remained on the cabin porch. It was not long before B'r Charlie's crutch could be heard tapping on the hard bayou path.

"Hy-dy, sister," he greeted as he climbed the stile.

"And you," responded Sissy, with cool politeness.

"Tol'able," said B'r Charlie. "You look mighty purty, settin' out hyar in de cool er de evenin'. Now efn de moon was shinin' on you, I don't know what I might say to you."

SISSY was silent. B'r Charlie negotiated the stile and walked to the edge of the porch.

"Lawd, honey, but you sho' is good-lookin' tonight," he declared. "All purtied up wid dat ribbon and all. I swear! I didn't know you had hit in you!" He laughed. "I got a good mind to stand hyar and marry myse'f up to you right hyar and now."

Sissy, acting under instructions from the Widow Duck, said nothing.

"You gonter marry me, ain't you, honey?" B'r Charlie pressed.

"Sho', she gonter marry you," the Widow Duck blurted as she stepped out of the house.

B'r Charlie went limp from the shock, and before he recovered, the Widow Duck was upon him. She passed the crutch to Sissy and, with one awkward but ponderous move, bore the surprised and frightened man to the ground. Then she deliberately sat upon him. The Widow Duck weighed all of two hundred and fifty pounds.

Sputtering and twisting, B'r Charlie

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alternately begged and demanded to be let up.

"You tawkin' now," the Widow Duck told him. "You been mouthin' Scripture at me for a long time. So what do de Book say about you comin' over hyar tonight?"

B'r Charlie had been in tight places before and always his glib tongue and brazen heart had rescued him. He looked abused and said, "Sissy is a po' widow woman and de Book say 'Minister ye tharfore to de po' widow womens—' "

"Nigger," interrupted the Widow Duck, "you's a lie. You comed down hyar to rogue dat gal outn some money, didn't you?"

B'r Charlie squirmed once more and then said boldly, "Hit was for de missions. You know good as me hit's more better for money to go to de missions den to git spunt on gin."

"WHAT de missions gonter do wid de money?" Widow Duck wanted to know.

B'r Charlie decided to bluff it through if he could. "Hit take money to carry on de Lawd's work. Paul say, 'Blessed is de servant who is worthy er de wages—' "

"You de servant, hunh?" broke in the Widow Duck, "and you been namin' yo' own wages outn de mission money, hunh?"

Wilting under the great weight of Widow Duck, B'r Charlie was in no position to argue. The best he could hope to do was justify himself and to do that as quickly as possible. "I works mighty hard for de Lawd," he said lamely.

"And you been gittin' plenty wages?"

"Some, yeah," he admitted.

"How much?"

B'r Charlie did not remember.

"Nigger, I'm gonter set on you to you tell me," the Widow Duck promised. And to demonstrate, she lifted both feet from the ground, putting an additional fifty pounds or more upon B'r Charlie's mashed form. "And efn dat ain't heavy 'nuff," she added, "I'll bounce up and down on you."

"Hit's about twenty dollars and fawty cents in de mission fund, now," B'r Charlie announced weakly. "And dat's ev'y last cent I got—'ceptin' fifteen cents I collected f'm Docus."

"Whar at?"

"Hid away."

"Hid away whar'bouts?"

"Now, Widow Duck—"

"I'll bounce," she threatened, "and sqush yo' gizzard."

"In a tin can, buried at de shop," B'r Charlie whined. "Now git offn me, woman. I can't hardly git my breaf."

"You stole my hen," accused the Widow Duck.

"Aw, I didn't steal—"

"I'll bounce," she warned.

"I jest tuck dat hen," B'r Charlie begged. "I was aimin' to pay you. Hit was jest a joke."

"Dat joke," she announced, "gonter cost you about fo' bits, cash money."

"I'll pay you, quick as you lets me up."

"And de wood you stole," she insisted.

"I jest tuck hit—"

The Widow Duck bounced once and Charlie was silenced.

"Hit'll cost you a nickel for de wood," she told him.

"I'll pay you, woman," he pleaded. "Lemme up—"

"I figgered you would," Widow Duck stated. "But dat ain't all. You owes Sissy, too."

"Who, me?" B'r Charlie was righteously indignant. "I don't owe her nothin'. She owe me. I brung her dat hen—"

The Widow Duck "bounced" again, and B'r Charlie fell into a pleading silence.

"I figgers," estimated the Widow Duck casually, "dat you owes Sissy about twenty dollars, cash money."

"Hunh?" Charlie exploded, but the Widow Duck lifted her feet clear of the ground, and he stopped talking.

"Yeah," continued the Widow Duck, "you britched dat poor gal's promise and I figgers de twenty dollars you got will jest about onbritch her. You axed her to marry you and you already got a wife."

"Aw, Widow Duck," pleaded B'r Charlie, "dat ain't right. Sho' 'nuff. You kin mash my gizzard outn my body but you know dat ain't *sorter* right. I pay you for de hen and de wood, and happy, too. But givin' Sissy twenty dollars—"

The Widow Duck bounced a few more times and B'r Charlie quieted. "I figgers," she went on, "dat about twenty dollars will git Sissy a nice dress and buy her grub to hold her to cotton pickin' starts and by den, I bet she'll have her a husband to look out for her."

"Dat's my mission money," B'r Charlie pleaded. "Quick as I gits enough saved up I'm gonter go over to Af'ica and mission."

"You gonter mission dat money out, right hyar on Bee Bend," the Widow Duck told him.

"Mash my gizzard out," B'r Charlie said defiantly, "but I ain't." And he closed his eyes and gritted his teeth in anticipation of the Widow Duck's worst.

But the Widow Duck did not bounce. Instead, she stood up, brushed her hands together and chuckled. "Nawp," she said. "I ain't gonter mash you no more, B'r Charlie. And I ain't gonter quote no more Scripture at you. You kin outquote me, day or night."

B'r Charlie sat up and breathed deeply. "Dat's right, Sister," he beamed. "I got you on de Scripture—"

"Me and Sissy fixin' to take a little wawk, B'r Charlie," the Widow Duck interrupted. "I thought you might be int'rusted, 'cause we's fixin' to wawk up to Giles' house."

Charlie became suspicious. "What you gonter do at Giles' house?" he asked. Charlie feared Giles and he knew what Giles would do to a chicken thief.

"Don't fret yo'se'f," the Widow Duck said. "Us ain't gonter tell Giles about you stealin' my hen, and us ain't gonter tell him about you roguin' around Sissy. 'Cause we aims to wawk slow, and before us gits to Giles' house you gonter lay four bits and a nickel in my hand. Dat'll make you buy my hen and wood instid er stealin' 'em to give to yo' woman. Den you gonter lay a cold twenty dollars in Sissy's hand, and dat'll onbritch her promise, so's she won't have nothin' to tell Giles about, too." The Widow Duck turned to Sissy. "Come on, honey," she said. "Le's wawk."

THEY walked. But B'r Charlie outwalked them. And when they passed his shop, he was standing, money in his hand, waiting.

"Hyar yo' money, Widow Duck," he said, graciously, handing her fifty-five cents, "and I thanks you. And you, Miss Sissy, hyar is de offerin' f'm de mission to help you git goin'. De mission is powerful glad to help out a poor widow woman—"

The Widow Duck laughed silently deep down in her stomach. "Aw, B'r Charlie," she said, "save dem kind words to speak at her weddin'. She'll be needin' 'em purty soon quick as I gits her dressed up and fed good."

B'r Charlie bowed elaborately. "Well," he said, "Good night, all."

"Good night, B'r Charlie," said the Widow Duck.

"Good night," added Sissy.

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Talking Boy

Continued from page 18

these, the San Carlos and the White Mountain groups, were friendly to the whites, but the other four, the Agua Calientes, the Tontos, the Cibicus and the Chiricahuas could nearly always be depended upon to make trouble and plenty of it. Nor could the members of the various tribes, all of whom spoke the same language, be distinguished one from the other except by the way they cut their hair and their degree of meanness.

This degree of meanness was progressive. There were four grades to it and it ran in the order in which the four warlike tribes are named above. The Agua Caliente braves were the least devilish of the four and the Chiricahuas the most, but as tribal membership was not binding it was an easy matter for any warrior to change his status. A Tonto, for instance, who wanted to get worse than he already was could promote himself by merely changing his haircut to the style in vogue among the Chiricahuas and going over to dwell in their camp. Or if he wanted to reform he could do so by trimming his locks in the San Carlos fashion and moving into their community.

The numerical strength of the various tribes was thus constantly changing, so were the whereabouts of most of the renegades, which probably accounts for the fact that no sooner had Major Chaffee, the first military Indian agent to arrive in Arizona, gotten himself comfortably seated in his swivel chair than he sent for Tom Horn and instructed him to go over and live for a while with the Cibicus. Tom was willing, but Chief Pedro, who had come to the fort with him, objected. "No," said the old Indian to the major, "you must not send this boy to the Cibicus. He would go to his death. They would burn him at the stake and then send an old squaw in to tell you to keep your rations and send them some more white warriors."

Sieber and Horn to the Rescue

The chief's counsel prevailed. Tom went back to the San Carlos camp and a few months later, the government with its usual degree of intelligence having decided that no white man could live on the reservations, he and Al Sieber were both fired. But not for long. When their discharges came they went to Tombstone, took up claims and were preparing to become real miners when early in 1878 a rush order was received from General Willcox telling them to report to him at Fort Whipple at once, and that their names were already back on the pay roll. At Fort Whipple General Willcox told them that everything was in bad shape. Being unobserved, many of the Indians had gone to making tiz-win again, all of the renegades were drinking it, and under its influence they were robbing, raiding and killing, and the soldiers were unable to come up with them. Could Sieber and Horn do anything about it?

They could. Under Sieber's direction a scouting force was again organized; Tom Horn, a kid of eighteen, was put in command—Sieber had another—and they went to work. They did a good job; so good in fact that it was not long until old Nana and Geronimo, chiefs of the Chiricahuas, whose headquarters for devilment were across the line in old Mexico, sent word to Tom Horn by an old squaw that they wanted him and Sieber to come and see them. No army officers, however, were invited to this conference. According to the Apaches' message, army officers didn't know anything about Indians anyway; Sieber and Horn did, and therefore the scouts were asked to be at a certain place on Terras Mountain, about one hundred and fifty miles south of the border, at the full of the May moon. They were there on time and at ten o'clock at night they rode into the Indian camp. It was a big one, containing probably twelve hundred redskins, and after they had eaten and been notified that the "big talk" with Geronimo would take place at sunup, Tom went about renewing old acquaintances among the Indians. It was daylight when he rejoined Sieber; together they made their way to the council fire and it was there that the Talking Boy had his first sight of Geronimo.

"He was certainly a grand chief," Tom said. "Six feet high, motions as easy as a panther's, and when he turned to look at me his eyes were so sharp they seemed to stick right in."

A Heroic Ultimatum

"Who will interpret for us?" asked Geronimo. Sieber indicated that Tom would and the chief turned on him. "I speak very fast. Can you undertake to translate what I say?"

"You have only one mouth," replied the boy, "and all that comes out of it I can understand."

"Well spoken, young man," answered Geronimo, and then, to use Tom Horn's expression, the old chief cut loose. He talked for an hour, and as a consideration for his leaving the warpath and going back to live in peace on the reservation in Arizona, he asked for everything he could think of, including two Mexican experts to make cactus whisky for him.

When he had finished, and Tom Horn had translated his final word, Sieber spoke. "Tom," said the scout, "tell Geronimo just what I say: no more and no less. It is this: 'I do not trust you, Geronimo. I have no idea you will do as you say. You would stay on the reservation maybe one moon, but no more. You have asked for everything you could think of, except to have these mountains moved up into my country for you to live in. If you are entitled by your conduct to ask for all you have, then why not ask for these mountains? No, Geronimo, you will get nothing except the rations, the blankets and the things the others are getting. That and no more can I promise you, except this: I promise you, Geronimo, that the time will come when the boundary line will no longer protect you. American soldiers, who are as many as the leaves on the trees, will soon follow you into these mountains. You are doomed to capture and your tribe to extermination. That is all.'" And the old scout turned and walked away.

It took courage, a lot of it, for Tom Horn to face the old savage and deliver that ultimatum. But he did it; he made it emphatic, and when he had finished, Geronimo's eyes, instead of blazing with hate, were glowing with admiration.

"Anybody," said the Indian, "who has two such men as you and 'Sieb' attending to their business will have it well handled. And as for you, my son"—and the old chief extended his hand to Tom Horn—"you are a young man and will always be at war with me and my people, but whenever you want to come to my camp as a messenger, do so and do not be afraid. War is one thing, talk is another, and I will be as glad to meet you in council as in battle."

This conference brought no satisfactory results. Sixty-two of Geronimo's followers, including Loco, an old chief who had been a famous trouble-maker in his younger days, did return to the reservation with the two scouts, but, as it developed, this was merely a feeler put out by the savages to test Uncle Sam's sincerity. They wanted to know if this government really meant that the renegades could come back from Mexico and not be hanged, and as soon as they found that out—old Loco having established a Chiricahua camp at San Carlos, and drawn rations—an entirely new game was started. It was a dandy.

"Think hard now, pal—don't you remember last night when you hired us?" *Frank Owen*

Chiricahuas on the Warpath

Previously, after raiding and killing in Arizona, the Chiricahuas had used Mexico as an asylum to which they could flee with their loot, but now, with the United States promising them immunity for past crimes, the situation was so reversed that they began to raid towns and ranches in Mexico, appear at the border, demand an escort and with their plunder, mostly stolen stock, come safely across the line. It was really a nice arrangement. During the year following his first conference with Geronimo Tom Horn spent most of his time furnishing safe conduct to bunches of Apaches who came out of Mexico and wanted to get to Loco's camp, and then, suddenly, one morning at daylight, the end came.

There were a few gunshots. Tom Horn, asleep in his camp which was just on the edge of Loco's, sat up to listen. A moment later a tame Indian came in with the news that the Chiricahuas were breaking out on the warpath, and, being a man of judgment, Tom climbed up a mountainside and hid himself in the rocks. Lacking judgment, George Stirling, chief of the Indian police, rode in to see what was going on. He found out. From where he was hiding Tom saw the Apaches kill Stirling—"They shot him about twenty-five times and a squaw cut his head off"—and then on they came. "Great droves of horses and mules, probably five thousand of them, were strung out for a mile and a half. Squaws and children everywhere driving the stock. The squaws all yelling at the children and the children all yelling at the animals. A small bunch of about twenty warriors was in front, and in the rear came the main body of them, five or six hundred strong."

Aching for a Fight

Hell was now loose and Tom Horn knew it. He jumped a horse, rode thirty-two miles and swam two swollen rivers, got around the Apaches and reached Fort Thomas with the news of the outbreak at ten o'clock. Nothing, however, could be done to head off the Indians and drive them back to the reservation. The soldiers in the territory were too widely scattered to be of any service in such an emergency. Small detachments attacking the savages would only get whipped and so Sieber and Tom Horn, with a few San Carlos scouts, were instructed to go out, follow the Apaches and, by sending back runners, keep the military authorities posted as to the movements of the savages. They did this; getting on the flank of the redskins that same afternoon, and then, as the Indians separated into different groups, Sieber and Horn had to separate also. Thereafter, with practically nothing to hinder their progress, but with Tom Horn and Al Sieber following their dust clouds by day and sleeping within sight of their camp fires at night, the two columns of Apaches, who were responding to an order from their great war chief, old Geronimo, made their way down to the Mexican border. They there converged, crossing the line, and the next morning Major Tupper, U. S. A., with forty-five troopers and twenty Indian scouts under a man named Sage rode up to the boundary.

This imaginary, invisible line, however, meant nothing to Major Tupper. He was such a man, evidently, as wars are made of, and what he wanted and what he told Al Sieber and Tom Horn he wanted, was a whack at those damn' Indians. He got one. Horn went ahead; the next day he located the savages, and that night, owing to the fact that the redskins, thinking they were safe from pursuit because they were in Mexico, had failed to post sentries, he led Tupper's men to a position from which they could make a surprise attack at dawn.

When day broke, so did the fight. At the first fire five Apaches were killed, and at the same time a soldier named Murray, who was beside Horn, was knocked down by a bullet. Tom dropped his own gun, carried this man to safety, and when he got back to his rifle it was too late to use it. The shooting was all over, the Indians were again in retreat, and when assembly sounded it was found that one soldier had been killed, one wounded and two hundred and sixty ponies captured.

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According to Tom Horn these results were highly pleasing to Major Tupper, and late that afternoon, when Colonel Forsythe, also of the U. S. A., and also a man who had no respect for international boundaries, rode up and saw what his brother officer had accomplished he was so stirred with envy that he immediately declared that he too wanted a whack at the enemy and wanted to capture some horses.

But his luck wasn't as good as Major Tupper's had been, because when his command, led into position by Tom Horn, got within sight of the Indians they were astounded to hear a lot of heavy firing going on, and to see an additional heavy dust-cloud arise. What was it? Had somebody beaten him to his prey?

Colonel Forsythe ordered full speed ahead to find out and suddenly ran head-on into the Fifth Regiment of Chihuahua Cavalry, which gallant organization, under the command of Colonel Garcia, having attacked the noncombatant division of the Indian column and slain one hundred and sixty-seven women and children, was now fleeing as hard as it could to escape the wrath of the braves, who would certainly have demolished all the Mexicans had it not been for the untimely arrival of the American troops.

A Mexican's Gratitude

For this accidental act of salvation, however, Colonel Garcia was not overwhelmingly grateful. But he was courteous in that as soon as he had exchanged salutes with Colonel Forsythe he asked the American officer to have breakfast with him. Colonel Forsythe accepted, but when he saw the meal set before him, and noticed that the entire pack train of the Mexican regiment consisted of three half-laden burros, he switched the deck by asking Colonel Garcia to eat with him. This Colonel Garcia did; he ate well, and when he was amply fortified with good grub he gave evidence of his appreciation by rising to his feet and placing the entire American command under arrest.

"You have unlawfully entered my country," he said with dignity, "and you are my prisoners. You may retain your side arms, but I shall dismount your men and confiscate your horses and your pack train, and—"

But that was as far as Colonel Garcia got. "The devil you say," retorted Colonel Forsythe; "we came in here without any orders from Washington and we are now going to leave without any from any fleabitten Mexican colonel. Good day, sir."

Back in Arizona again, Tom Horn's trail, always following that of the numerous renegade Apaches who began to pop up all over the territory, now becomes too complicated for us to follow in detail. All we can do is cut it in spots, here and there, and as we do this, not long after his return from Mexico, we come upon him asleep in a tepee in a camp of the hostile Cibicus. Two other scouts are with him; they are also asleep, and as we watch we see an Indian girl raise the flap, enter noiselessly, step over one of the other men, lie down beside Tom Horn and put her arms around him. She is only ten years old, though, and so there is no scandal.

For a few moments the child lay there, whispering to the Talking Boy, and then left him. In the morning Tom Horn, who with Sieber, Captain Hentig and about thirty men was trying to run down some renegade Cibicus who had been guilty of an inordinate indulgence in crime, reported to Hentig that two Cibicu guides, called Dead Eye and Dandy Jim, who had the day before volunteered to show the captain where the renegades were hiding, were in reality leading him into a trap.

Hentig scoffed at the warning, and Horn and Sieber, to whom Tom had repeated what the child had told him, shrugged their shoulders: "You're in command, Captain," they said. "Follow these men if you want to, but we are goin' to keep our eyes on 'em, and maybe civilize 'em too."

The captain did follow the volunteer guides: they led him straight into an ambush and the fun started. At the first fire Dead Eye and Dandy Jim, who were in the lead, of course left on the run. Inside of ten minutes Captain Hentig was killed and a dozen men had been wounded. Then Tom Horn saved the command. He saw the attacking Indians running to get to a high point right over the soldiers. He beat them to it, held the place alone for several minutes and then, after five men had joined him, they had control of the situation. Later on Tom received a letter from General Willcox "threatening" him with a medal of honor for this act.

Tom's next contact with General Willcox was slightly different. It came about in this way: In 1881 a delegation of peaceful San Carlos Indians called on their friend, the Talking Boy, and reported that a gang of Mexican bandits had developed the habit of invading the reservation and stealing stock. Tom at once took action, armed a number of the tame braves and, by swooping down on the Mexican raiders at exactly the right moment, he managed to kill three of them. Then, with the deceased trio lying there in full view, he and his redmen started to make camp.

While they were so engaged up rode General Willcox in an ambulance. The general, although he didn't recognize Tom, who probably hadn't shaved or washed for a week, did take immediate cognizance of the corpses. "What does this mean?" he demanded. Tom told him. "Who are you?" Tom told him that also, and then the general let go. In good military language General Willcox expressed the thought that there never would be peace on the border so long as men like Tom Horn—to whom only a short time before he had wanted to hand a medal—took Indians off the reservation and let them go out and slaughter Mexicans, as in this instance.

This made Tom mad, and again, but not in Apache this time, he justified his nickname. Using a copious border phraseology, which he had picked up along with his other languages, Tom Horn told General Willcox just exactly what he thought of the United States Army. It wasn't much, but it took a long time to say it, and when the boy stopped for breath, the general took advantage of the opportunity to order him and his Indians to leave camp.

"Don't worry about that," replied the young man as he started away; "we were just going anyhow."

"But hold on there," shouted the general after him. "What are you going to do with these dead Mexicans?"

"Nothing," yelled Tom; "you can have 'em."

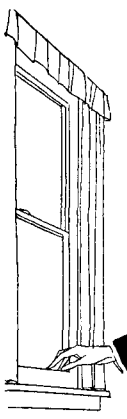
This retort must have amused the general. At any rate something mollified him because he called the boy back, they had lunch together, and the incident was forgotten.

Talking Boy Talks

Thus time went by. Life for Tom Horn became just one explosive incident after another.

Glittering generals in shining uniforms came to Arizona to settle the Indian question, failed and left. But the Talking Boy stayed on. In 1883, for example, General Crook appeared to succeed General Willcox. At that time the Chiricahuas, still operating from Geronimo's base down in old Mexico,

(Continued on page 40)



OPEN IT··*I'm Hot!*

CLOSE IT··*I'm Cold!*

....but the temperature had little to do with it!

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Others feel hot when the temperature is really lower—and want the windows open.

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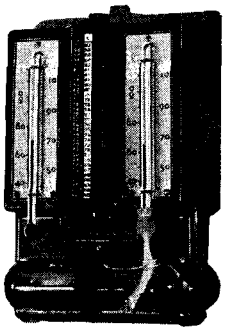

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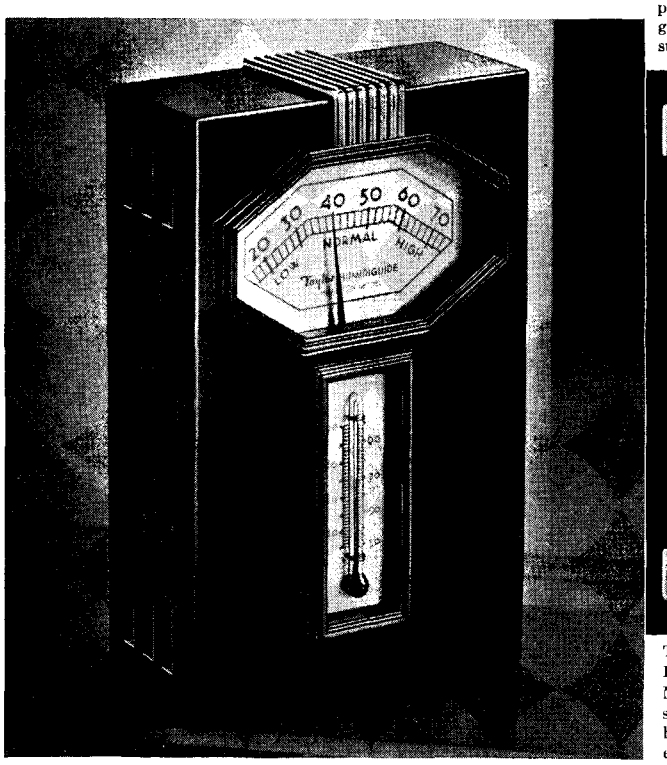
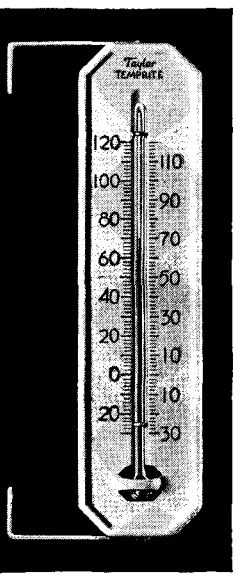


TAYLOR HUMIDIGUIDE, Hampton model, No. 5538. Shows air condition at a glance—humidity with hygrometer, temperature with thermometer. Ebony finished case 6" x 4" with chrome highlights. Price $5.00.



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(Continued from page 39)

were making plenty of trouble and at once the new C. O. expressed a desire to get into communication with the savage chieftain. Through the medium of a belligerent squaw whom he had captured some time before and who was still in the lock-up, Tom Horn furnished the desired means.

He liberated this woman, gave her a mule and a sack of grub and told her to go to Geronimo and tell him to send in someone to talk to General Crook. The reply to this message arrived in the shape of a warrior named Peechee, who first informed Tom Horn, and then, through Tom, told General Crook that the Chiricahuas wanted the American commander to organize a big expedition, take it to Mexico, accept their surrender and conduct them back to the reservation. Omitting details, that is exactly what General Crook did. After proper diplomatic arrangements had been made with the Mexican government, he got together a strong force, crossed the line, and once again, as a result of this, did Tom Horn have to stand in the center of a solemn circle around Geronimo's council fire.

General Crook, however, had planned otherwise. In fact he had brought two old interpreters with him but Geronimo would have none of them. "No," he said, "I will talk only through the lips of the Talking Boy. He is honest; he has never lied to an Indian."

That settled that. Tom did the talking; there was lots of it, and the outcome of it all was—after Geronimo had had private midnight conferences, first with Al Sieber and then with Tom Horn—that the Chiricahuas went back to Arizona and allowed themselves to be again installed on the reservation.

More time went by; two years of it, during which Tom Horn, who had succeeded Sieber as chief of scouts, the latter being crippled with rheumatism, was as turbulently busy as ever, and then in 1885, as a surprise to nobody at all, Geronimo again took to the warpath, bathed Arizona in a sea of blood, and went back to Mexico.

This, of course, meant another foreign invasion. General Crook ordered one; a large force crossed the line; established its headquarters far down at Nacori, and from that point Tom Horn and his scouts, accompanied by a detachment of cavalry, all under command of Captain Emmet Crawford, one of the best Indian fighters the West ever saw, set out to locate Geronimo. Horn soon did that and was able to arrange to give the Apaches a surprise party at daylight.

This was measurably successful. As his contribution Tom Horn brought in Chief Nana, one of the worst of the Chiricahuas, whom he had taken single-handed while the rest of the outfit, after killing quite a satisfactory number of braves, had captured a few more together with quite an assortment of squaws, papooses and other plunder.

A Loss to the Service

The next thing to come along was another squaw who appeared bringing word that Chihuahua, one of Geronimo's lieutenants, wanted to surrender. Tom Horn arranged this, and Chihuahua and his men were soon on their way back to Arizona, but no truce could be made with Geronimo, who after a final talk with the Talking Boy, who went alone into the hostile camp for that purpose, folded his tents during the night and disappeared into the Sierra Madres.

Thus, having failed to accomplish much, this expedition went back to Arizona where it was immediately learned that General Crook had been relieved and General Miles had taken command of the department. Tom Horn's status also changed. A San Francisco paper came out with an article charging that the young chief of scouts was more of an Apache than an American; that he could enter and leave the hostile camps whenever he wanted to; that he always did the interpreting and that, as no other white man could understand the Indians, he could say what he wanted to.

Horn read this article, resigned his position and at once the paper printed another article. This time it said that now, having no traitors to deal with, General Miles would soon dispose of Geronimo. But he didn't. In several engagements with the renegades the U. S. regulars were well trimmed to the end that it was not long until the Chiricahuas were again indulging in their old pastime of crossing the line into Arizona, raiding and robbing, and then recrossing back to Mexico.

On the Trail Again

Finally General Miles sent for Tom Horn, had a talk with him, reinstated him as chief of scouts and, as an American force under Captain Lawton was below the border, he instructed the boy to go down there and see what could be done.

Tom went and for two months, sometimes only a few hours behind the savages and again maybe a couple of days in the rear, he kept the American troops on Geronimo's trail.

This was a wearing grind; it told heavily on the old chief, so that at last, again using a squaw as an emissary, he sent word back that he wanted to have a conference with the Talking Boy. Right here, though, an obstacle intervened. Captain Lawton had previously received instructions from General Miles that Tom Horn, not being considered trustworthy, was not to go alone to Geronimo's camp, and so until the order was revoked nothing could be done. It was revoked: by heliograph messages between Miles and Lawton, and then within three days the Talking Boy had seen Geronimo and gotten him to agree to meet General Miles in Skeleton Canyon at a date far enough in the future for them both to get there.

But another snag was now struck. When General Miles confirmed this agreement, saying he would meet Geronimo at the appointed time, he did so in a dispatch addressed to Captain Lawton. Geronimo, however, would have none of this; he didn't trust military men. "Go back," he said to the Talking Boy; "send the word yourself and get an answer, directed to you, saying Miles will meet me."

This was tried and when General Miles' answer was received it read: "See Captain Lawton. He is in command in the field. I cannot transact business with a civilian."

That settled it. "It's all off," said Tom Horn to Captain Lawton. Twenty-four hours later, while asleep at a ranch house, Tom Horn was awakened by a lieutenant, who, bristling with importance, was carrying a message from the general. "To hell with the general," said Tom Horn; "I'm tired."

"But read it," urged the lieutenant. Tom did; it said: "Make any arrangements you can for me to meet Geronimo. I will go when and where you say."

The Sad End of a Scout

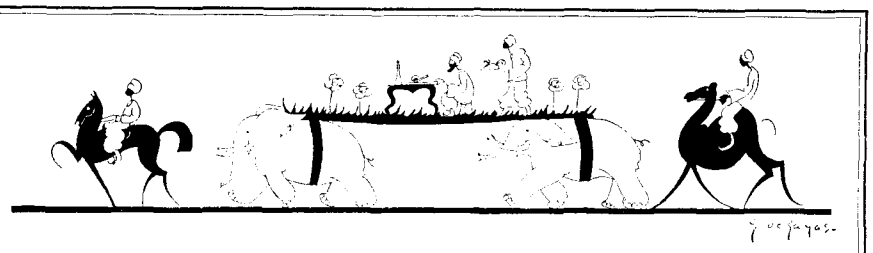
The end of the Apache wars was now imminent. Tom Horn fixed it. Within two weeks General Miles and Geronimo stood facing each other in Skeleton Canyon and there also stood the Talking Boy. But once again the old difficulty arose. General Miles did not want Tom Horn to act as interpreter, and Geronimo would have no one else. "But he is not a sworn interpreter," said General Miles.

Geronimo shrugged his shoulders: "I do not want him sworn," he said. "When this boy comes to my camp, do I ask him if he is telling the truth? No! That I never do. He and I speak only the truth to one another. You have sent word that you would have nothing to do with him, and I tell you now that I will have nothing to do with anyone else."

That remark ended the argument: the Talking Boy did the interpreting, and when the conference had ended so likewise had Geronimo's career. He and his Chiricahuas were sent to Florida, where the old chief died in prison, while Tom Horn, who immediately left the government service and later became a live-stock detective, was hanged in Wyoming in 1903.

He was an innocent man, though. There can be little doubt of it. He was "framed" because of the active part he took in a war between sheepherders and cattlemen and was executed, charged with a murder which later investigation showed it was practically impossible for him to have committed. Just before he went to the scaffold he wrote a letter to a friend asserting his innocence, the last line of which read:

"This is the truth, as I am going to die in ten minutes"—and if old Geronimo had only been his judge the Talking Boy would have been believed.



Keep Up with the World

By Freling Foster

Even on visits to great cities, Indian princes often carry all the food and water that they and their large retinues will require during the entire trip. But only one prince, Maharaja Madho Singh of Jaipur, ever carried a plot of earth on which to sit while eating.

Workers in dynamite factories are often affected by chronic nitroglycerin poisoning, which causes such throbbing headaches that the victim sometimes becomes temporarily insane.—*By G. R. Allan, Denver, Colorado.*

In the mountains along the Yangtze Valley, China, thousands of families whose houses are built on the side of the steep, high cliffs keep their children tethered to the doorposts so they cannot fall off the platforms to the rocks hundreds of feet below.

The only monument in the United States erected to perpetuate the memory of German World War losses has just been completed in Asheville, North Carolina. It stands near the graves of eighteen sailors who died there during their internment.

Fish produce more malformed young than any other living creatures. Among the strangest are those hatched with five perfect heads on one body.—*By Mrs. Elizabeth Rae, Storm Lake, Iowa.*

About 1,000 years ago, England and Germany permitted murderers to exonerate themselves by paying a sum of money to relatives of the deceased. Guilds were even established to make these payments for their members.

Even the breeding of thoroughbred race horses was operated on a "mass production" basis not many years ago when, in his twin stables in California and Kentucky, the late J. B. Haggin was using 40 famous stallions and 600 brood mares.

A most extraordinary enterprise of the early 19th century, before steam transportation and artificial refrigeration, was the shipping of ice from Boston to Calcutta, India, a sailing distance of more than 12,000 miles.

The Araucanian Indians of southern Chile frequently hold "convulsion parties" at which they all smoke a certain plant that not only induces a heavy intoxication but brings on severe convulsive tremors.

The even division of wealth throughout a country actually has been tried. About 800 A. D., King Muni Tsenpo of Tibet distributed all the wealth in his kingdom three different times, giving everyone an equal share. But each time the clever men soon owned it all.—*By M. L. Burg, Livingston, Montana.*

The most baffling act of levitation—the suspension of a man in mid-air supposedly without mechanical aid—was presented in London in 1868. A man named Home actually convinced scientists that he had preternatural power by floating horizontally out one window and into another while 70 feet from the ground.

A recent invention is a slot-machine "message board" used by persons who cannot wait to keep appointments in stations, hotel lobbies and other meeting places. Messages for friends are left by inserting a coin, opening a glass shutter and writing in the space provided.

There are more than 100 different kinds of sugars, some of them being very rare and costly. For example, dextro-ribose costs at least $40 a gram, which is at the rate of $18,144 a pound.—*By N. W. Adolph, Grafton, Illinois.*

Five dollars will be paid for each interesting or unusual fact accepted for this column. Contributions must be accompanied by satisfactory proof. Address Keep Up with the World, Collier's, 250 Park Avenue, New York City.

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Gallows of Chance

Continued from page 22

"I don't get much of a chance," she replied. "We were just having a sort of intimate talk when you came in."

Mr. Humble chuckled. Then he leaned forward in his place and faced her.

"Young lady," he demanded, "are you the fiancée of my friend, Mr. Pank?"

"Never mind what I am," was the sharp reply. "I was having a kind of private talk with him anyway when you butted in."

"IF YOU'RE *the fiancé of my young friend,*" Mr. Humble continued, "there's nothing more to be said. I may regret the fact but I shall keep my feelings to myself. In any case, let me tell you this—Mr. Pank and I have tastes in common. We seldom meet: when we do it's a mutual pleasure. A mutual pleasure, I think, Mr. Pank?"

Her cousin's reply was bitterly disappointing to Amy.

"Mr. Humble," he said earnestly, "there's no man I like to have a chat with more than you. Here are our drinks. Now, Amy, sit up and join us. Looks like good port."

"The port's all right," Amy declared shortly.

"How's business, Mr. Humble?" Pank inquired.

"I'm doing nothing at the moment," the former confided in a little outburst of frankness. "My last piece of work was a very ticklish and important commission. I have received the first installment of my payment for it and I am now resting. I'm waiting for what may come along. With regard to funds," he went on, "if that trifling amount—"

"That's all right," Pank interrupted graciously. "I'm not dunning you if that's what you are thinking about."

"Never gave it a thought," Mr. Humble declared, with a magnificent gesture. "Between gentlemen those matters are not discussed. They just right themselves when the—er—time comes. How is the heel business?"

"Excellent," Pank admitted. "Talking about business," he added, "I showed you my sample heel the other day, so you know what my job is. What might yours be?"

Mr. Humble drained the contents of his tumbler and watched Pank signal to the barman with apparent unconsciousness.

"In one sense of the word I am an artist," he confided.

"I guessed it was something like that," his young friend remarked respectfully. "A sculptor perhaps, or something of that sort."

"Why sculptor?" the other demanded, toying with the idea and apparently disliking it.

"Because of your hands. There's a look of the artist about you and yet seemingly you work with your hands."

"Quite the Sherlock Holmes, aren't you?" Mr. Humble observed, accepting his refilled tumbler with mild surprise. "Here's the best. My turn next, remember. Well, as it happens, you are absolutely right about that. A sculptor I am not—never tried my hand at it. Painting I have done on a large scale and a small. Designing and fitting—all that comes into my work. Have another guess, my boy."

"You've got me floored," Pank confessed. "Put us out of our misery."

"I'll do so," Mr. Humble conceded graciously. "I see no harm in telling you that I am a well-known builder of *scenery in cinema studios.*"

Ex-detective Pank suffered the intelligence to sink into his sufficiently alert mind. There was perhaps a single spark of fire in his eyes—a single throb under his neat waistcoat. It was only one thread of the skein but it was wound tightly around his fingers.

"I felt certain that you were something of the sort," he declared. "What do you think of that, Amy?"

Amy had relapsed into gloom and was only faintly interested.

"I have made some queer sets in my time, too," Mr. Humble went on reflectively. "Some that I ain't going to talk about even to you. There are times when it pays us to boost our work, and others when we get well paid for saying nothing about it. My last job—well never mind about that. It's the one I don't talk about."

Pank moved his chair a little closer to the fire.

"I wonder whether you ever worked at that studio that they have pulled down now out Hellesdon way?" he speculated.

"I may have," was the cautious reply. "What do you know about the place?"

"Nothing. Only I was staying at the Royal about the middle of December, and there were some men there—three of them—who, I believe, were in the film business. I heard them say something about the studio one night, and I rather thought they were going to buy it. I passed there the other day, though, and it was all pulled down."

"Closing time in ten minutes, gentlemen," the landlord called out, opening the door.

Mr. Humble had apparently gone off into a brown study. His eyes were fixed upon the ceiling and his thoughts seemed to be far away.

"Same again, Harry," Pank ordered briskly. "No, I know what you're going to say, Mr. Humble. Can't be done. You can stand what you like outside this place, but here I'm at home."

Mr. Humble conceded the point and accepted a cigarette.

"Three of them there were," his young friend continued reflectively. "Seemed to have plenty of money. Champagne all the time in the coffee-room."

Humble nodded darkly. He had assumed an air of mystery.

"Payne, one of them called himself."

"Little sandy chap?"

"Come to think of it, he was," Pank agreed. "Did they do business up at your show?"

MR. HUMBLE sampled the contents of his last tumbler. His speech was somewhat less precise and he had difficulty with his cigarette.

"A fortnight ago, Ernest Pank," he said, "I should not have answered you that question. I shouldn't have answered even you, one of my old pals. Today it don't matter. The business is wound up. Yes, they did come there, and a rummy go it was."

Ernest Pank yawned as he glanced at his watch. He rose to his feet and Amy followed suit with alacrity. Mr. Humble, however, had not finished.

"In my career, if you can call it a career," he went on reminiscently, "I have come across things which the ordinary person might call mysterious, things the ordinary person would not be able to understand at all. I don't know, though, that anything could cap this business up at the studio. The set I made up there to order was one of the finest that have ever been seen. Money poured out, all the timber I wanted, all the help, all the tools. Finest scene I've ever made. Couldn't have been beaten in the States—couldn't have been beaten anywhere. They all came up to look at it. They all said the same thing. There was a bit of a rehearsal one night. The company was to start turning the next day, and when the next day came—you won't believe me, Ernest, my lad, but it's true—everyone got their notice and within twenty-four hours the place was a pack of ruins."

"You're joking!" Pank exclaimed.

"A pack of ruins, that's what it was," Mr. Humble continued doggedly. "That marvelous set of mine, a wonderful work of art, was broken up and half the stuff was burned!"

"Seems a queer business," Ernest Pank remarked. "I don't see what there was for those men to buy if they broke it all up afterwards."

"A mystery," Mr. Humble pronounced, holding his glass unsteadily in his hand and surveying its diminished contents. "That's the word I used. That's what it was. They were up there that one night, the studio all aflame and the set working. The next day they were gone, and in the morning you couldn't tell where the studio had been. Where's the sense of it?"

"A fool's business, it seems to me," his friend pronounced.

"You're right," Mr. Humble agreed. "That's what it was. A fool's business. That scene of mine might have made me a fortune, with me to run it, if—"

"What was the scene?"

MR. HUMBLE drained the remaining contents of his tumbler, then he rose to his feet.

"Paid double to keep my mouth shut," he said sorrowfully. "Not that it matters here in present company, but a man should keep his word. Better take your young cousin home, Miss," he added to Amy. "I like him. He's a dear young friend of mine, but somehow when we're together talk I must."

"To take him home is just what I'm waiting to do," Amy agreed tartly. "Come along, Ernest."

Mr. Humble's leave-taking was almost precipitate.

"Good night, all," was his final salutation.

They heard him stumbling down the passage, heard the front door slam behind him. Ernest Pank seemed to have relapsed into a fit of abstraction. His good night was a purely mechanical movement of the lips. His eyes were fixed upon the door through which Mr. Humble had disappeared. Ideas were forming in his brain. . . . Amy tugged at his sleeve.

"Don't you think that you might kiss me good night," she suggested tearfully, "now that that horrid man is gone?"

. The detective vanished, the man survived. He folded her in his arms.

"Dear Cousin Amy," he whispered.

"Not so much 'cousin,'" she sighed.

Colonel Matterson, seated alone in his private room, stared for a moment without comprehension at the name scribbled on the usual form for visitors brought him by his orderly.

"Pank," he exclaimed. "Why, the little man whom we dismissed a few days ago."

"The same, sir. I was surprised to see him but I thought I'd better bring in his name."

"Show him up at once," Matterson enjoined.

(Continued on page 42)

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(Continued from page 41)

A moment or two later Ernest Pank was ushered into the sub-commissioner's room. There was still some slight nervousness in his manner, but he seemed to have gained in dignity and confidence during his brief absence. He was no longer afraid to take the chair to which the colonel pointed.

"Back again already, Pank," the latter exclaimed. "Good! Have you brought us any news?"

"News of a sort, sir," Pank admitted. "I believe I'm on the right track. At any rate I can tell you at once the name and whereabouts of the chauffeur who drove Sir Humphrey in the hired car, and I can tell you the name of his employer. With regard to the other matter, as to where Sir Humphrey was taken and who was at the bottom of that affair, I think I can solve that within an hour if we can find our man."

Colonel Matterson's somewhat querulous expression changed as though by magic.

"You will come back here, Pank, a full-blown inspector if that's true," he promised him.

"You are very kind, sir," was the grateful reply. "I must admit there is a great deal about the whole affair I cannot understand yet, but I honestly believe that before midday I can solve the mystery of Sir Humphrey's first disappearance. I believe that ought to lead to the clearing up of the present situation. I have a kind of theory about that in my mind, but there is a great gap to be filled up yet."

"If you do as much as you promise, Pank, you will have set the ball rolling all right," the sub-commissioner said cheerily.

"IT'S the second phase that is going to set us thinking. However, we shall have to leave that alone for the moment. What I want from you now, sir, is the full weight of Scotland Yard behind me. I should like Chief Inspector Smithers or Simpson and a couple of plain-clothes policemen. I want to visit a man on Shaftesbury Avenue and ask him, with your permission, a few straight questions with the law behind me to frighten him into telling the truth."

"That's easy enough," Matterson assented. "Smithers is in this morning, I happen to know. I will give orders and have a car ready. I must just see if the chief commissioner is free."

The chief commissioner was free and very glad to welcome the visitor whom Matterson presently took up to his room. He nodded to Pank in friendly fashion.

"Well, are you going to tell me the whole story?" he asked eagerly. "I hear that you have made some progress."

"May I ask you a great favor, sir?" Pank begged earnestly. "I could tell you straight off the name of the man who was the employer of the chauffeur, but you might not believe me, and it would spoil your interest in the rest of the proceedings. By midday you shall know all that I know, if we find our man at home."

The chief commissioner was disappointed, but tolerant.

"Have it your own way, Pank," he agreed. "I hear you are taking Smithers and two plain-clothes men with you. The sub-commissioner thought he would like to go along too. Any chance of a rough house?"

"Not the slightest, sir, I should say," was the confident reply.

"You would not care to give me a hint?" the general asked a little wistfully. "I have to telephone Downing Street this morning. I suppose you know that there is no news of Sir Humphrey."

"So I understand, sir. You can go so far as this with Downing Street at any rate, sir. You can tell them that you will be able to clear up the matter of Sir Humphrey's first disappearance before midday, and if that does not give us a clue as to the second—well, I shall be very disappointed."

"Are you sure that you will be able to find your man?" Matterson asked anxiously. "Why didn't you wire us for help?"

"Because I didn't want to scare him away. Even plain-clothes men are easily recognizable nowadays. I was walking the streets myself at eight o'clock this morning until I saw our man go where I believe he now is. I left a couple of friends of mine—nothing to do with the police—watching. If he goes out one of them will follow him. The other will stay there to tell us."

"GOT your head on you still, I see, Pank," the general remarked, smiling. "Well, be off then. Your escort will be ready for you by this time."

The sub-commissioner fetched his hat and overcoat and descended with his companion to the courtyard, where they found two cars waiting. Pank gave the address to the chauffeurs and took his place in the car containing Colonel Matterson and Smithers. The latter was a little chilly.

"Think you've stumbled across something, eh, Pank?" he asked.

"I think so," was the reply.

The car turned into Shaftesbury Avenue. A short distance along on the left-hand side they drew up before a block of offices. Pank looked eagerly up and down the pavement and smiled with relief.

"Our man's still here, sir," he announced. "Will you let me lead the way?"

Everyone looked around curiously. It was an old-fashioned block of offices and flats with a huge board of names stuck up inside the dingy hall. Pank studied it for a moment and turned to the others.

"Third floor," he announced.

They followed him in single file. They met no one on the stairs, which seemed to indicate that business was not brisk in the neighborhood. On the third floor Pank knocked at a door with a clouded glass top on which was painted in black letters:

NORWICH LIMITED

and underneath in smaller ones:

CLARENCE H. EDWARDS

"Come in," a masculine voice growled.

Pank obeyed the summons. He was followed by Colonel Matterson and Inspector Smithers, who was in uniform. The two plain-clothes men remained upon the landing. The occupant of the office, who was seated at a shabby desk, smoking a pipe and banging at a typewriter, gazed at his visitors in blank amazement. He was not a bad-looking person in his way and better dressed than his surroundings seemed to warrant. Of his surprise, however, there was no manner of doubt. He removed his pipe from between his teeth and waited for them to announce themselves.

"Mr. Edwards?" Pank inquired.

"That is my name," the man assented.

"An ostrich close-up that'll panic 'em, and you lose the film!" *Fritz Wilkinson*

"Who on earth are you all, and what do you want?"

"This gentleman," Pank indicated, "is Colonel Matterson, sub-commissioner of Scotland Yard. The other is Chief Inspector Smithers, also of Scotland Yard. I myself am simply Detective Pank, but I am acting in this matter instead of my superior officers because I happen to have had the case in hand."

MR. EDWARDS had still the appearance of a dazed man, but with his stupefaction there seemed to have become blended a measure of apprehension.

"What on earth," he demanded, "do you want with me?"

"Nothing very complicated," Pank assured him. "I want you to explain to the sub-commissioner who gave you the commission to build up that gallows scene in your cinema studio near Hellesdon; what was the object of it and who was your principal?"

The man Edwards began to tremble. He leaned back in his place. He was never a healthy-looking individual, but with every vestige of color drained from his cheeks his appearance was almost ghastly.

"The thing was a confidential commission," he muttered.

"There is no such thing as a confidential commission where the law is concerned," Colonel Matterson intervened sternly. "We will have that story if you please, Mr. Edwards."

The man expelled a long breath. Pank leaned over the desk towards him.

"Look here, Edwards," he said. "Make the best of a bad job. You knew it was a risky commission when you took it on. You have been found out. You're up against the law. The only way to avoid serious trouble now is to tell the truth."

"I'll tell the truth," Edwards decided. "Give me just a minute. Let me get my breath again. I didn't expect anything of this sort."

"Criminals seldom do expect to be found out," the sub-commissioner remarked.

The man banged the desk with his fist until the keys of his typewriter shook.

"I'm not a criminal," he declared. "There was nothing wrong in what I did. I had sunk all my capital in building that studio and buying a lot of properties. We made our first film and everything went wrong. Our star was taken ill. The story was rotten. Anyway, when it was finished our money was gone and the film was a flop. I didn't know what to do with the place. It was like a white elephant upon my hands, for I hadn't enough left even to think about making another film. I can tell you I came pretty near shooting myself.

"Then one day a gentleman drove up in a motor car. He asked to look around the place. He asked me whether I had a good head carpenter—whether I could build up scenes. Of course I had. Of course I could. He asked me to name a price for the place as it stood. Well, I did. 'You can have the cash tomorrow morning,' he promised, 'if you will carry out a commission for me.' Think of that, gentlemen, I ask you. What an escape! A new chance in life. I didn't want to go bankrupt. Nothing of the sort had ever happened to me before. What do you suppose I did? Why, I sold out and we worked like slaves for his commission, and we worked with a seal upon our mouths."

"AND who was this benefactor?" Colonel Matterson asked.

The man Edwards took no notice. He continued to address himself to Pank:

"There were only six of us from the first. One—my brother—his son, the head carpenter, named Humble, who had every reason to do as he was told, for no one liked his antecedents, and two apprentices. I called them together and told them what had happened. I promised them all the money that was owing and a thundering good sum as well, and they swore before their God that they would never breathe a word to a soul of the work they were doing. You know what the commission was, I suppose. We built up an imitation prison cell, then we had a paved courtyard outside with rigged-up imitation red brick walls and an iron gate, and finally—we built an execution shed."

There was a brief, throbbing silence. Some part of the man's emotion seemed to have its effect even upon his two questioners. He, himself, was in a bad way. He mopped his forehead and gasped for breath. Pank mercifully left him alone for a moment. As soon as he showed some signs of recovery, however, he continued.

"You built the real thing?" he demanded.

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"We built the real thing," Edwards admitted.

"And you were able to get the details right," Pank continued, "because your head carpenter had served his apprenticeship to Prince, the hangman. The only reason he was not taken on when Prince died was because he couldn't keep sober."

Edwards shivered in his chair.

"I don't know how you knew that," he muttered. "I should have thought for his own sake Humble would have kept his mouth closed. He made it at first without the drop. My client came and he was not satisfied. He wanted the rope slung in the orthodox way and he wanted the drop. Well, Humble soon arranged that. It was all perfect one night about the middle of December —I've got the date in my book—he came over and took possession. He was satisfied, and he paid down the money. Why, he paid marvelous. When it was all over he gave fifty pounds each to everyone who had worked, to swear once more that they would never tell a soul what they had been doing.

"They were an honest lot of chaps. With all their money back and a good bit over, what do you think they did? I should have sworn that there was not one of them would have breathed a word, and how you got to know about it I can't imagine. We handed over the place and left. A few hours later, by arrangement, we were back again and we burned and destroyed every one of the properties; we pulled the place to pieces so that there was not a yard of the stuff left. I have never seen the gentleman since, and what happened the night we all saw the place lit up, or who visited it, I don't know. I banked my money, came up here, took this office, and I'm preparing to start business."

"You are trying to make us believe then, I suppose," Colonel Matterson said sternly, "that you never knew about the man who was very nearly hanged in your infernal place?"

"Before God I never knew it, sir," Edwards declared. "Humble was the only one of us allowed there. We had no idea what took place. I never knew it, sir, and what's more I don't believe there was anything wrong."

"TELL me, then," Pank asked, "why do you suppose your benefactor—we are going to talk about him directly—why do you suppose he insisted upon your making the drop the full twenty-five feet with the trapdoor and the lever?"

"I don't know anything about that," Edwards muttered hoarsely. "He was a gentleman. I am sure he didn't do anything wrong."

"You seem very confident about some things," Colonel Matterson observed. "What did you think he wanted the place for?"

"To play a joke on someone, of course," Edwards replied. "Or it might have been to get the idea for some sort of private theatricals."

"You hadn't even the curiosity to ask him?" the sub-commissioner demanded incredulously.

"The first condition of the bargain," Edwards cried, striking the desk once more with his fist, "was that no questions were to be asked, and the second was—silence afterwards. We kept the first. Now, my God, I've broken the second. I have broken my word and I have told everything because you made me. I never reckoned about having the police in the matter at all."

"But you have not told us everything yet," Colonel Matterson reminded him ominously. "You have not told us what we must know—the name of your generous friend for whom you built this cinema scene."

"And, by God, I never will," Edwards shouted. "He acted like a gentleman to me, and I'm keeping my word."

He sat upright in his chair again. There was a gleam of dogged obstinacy in his eyes. No one spoke.

"You hear?" he went on. "A Norfolk man doesn't often go back on his word, and I am not going back on mine."

Colonel Matterson shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, Edwards," he said, "we shall certainly not try to persuade you. You had better get on your coat. Smithers, call in your men. They can take Edwards to the Vine Street cells. He can be moved afterwards. I will go round and make the charge."

THERE was a wild light in the man's eyes as he stared at what was going on. Smithers opened the door. The two plain-clothes men entered. The sub-commissioner pointed to the occupant of the chair.

"Take this man to Vine Street police station," he directed. "I will be along in a few minutes. I don't think you need handcuff him."

"Do you mean that you are sending me to prison?" Edwards called out, shrinking back in his chair.

"No alternative, my man," was the sub-commissioner's reply. "We have to know the name of your principal. It is possible—I won't say certain—that we might have taken a lenient view of your situation if you had made a clean breast of it. You can't defy the law, though. There are at least five different charges under which you can be dealt with—unless you change your mind."

The plain-clothes men were standing on either side of him. There was authority in their poise and manner.

"Listen, Edwards," Pank intervened. "I'll tell you something. I'll tell you something that the others don't know yet. I could answer their question. I know to whom you sold your studio. I know for whom you built that horrible place. You are doing no good by keeping the name back. You are simply making a foolish effort to pit yourself against the law, and it can't be done."

"You don't know his name," Edwards cried stubbornly. "Not a soul knows it."

"Indeed I do," Pank assured him. "I know the chauffeur who drove the hired car in which his victim was brought there. I know who employed that chauffeur, and even where he is at the present moment. It was the same man who found you that money and bought your studio."

"You're a liar," Edwards declared.

"I'm nothing of the sort," was the firm retort. "It was Lord Edward Keynsham, and you don't do him one ounce of good by denying it."

The man in the chair collapsed, but the most astonished person in the room was Colonel Matterson. He was on the point of speech but a warning look from Pank stopped him. The little man was indeed in charge of the situation.

"How did you know?" Edwards muttered.

"Tell the sub-commissioner that I am speaking the truth," Pank persisted. "He may be lenient with you."

"It's no good my holding out if you know," Edwards faltered, all the strength gone from his voice and manner. "Yes, you are right. It was Lord Edward Keynsham of Keynsham Hall."

AT FOUR O'CLOCK on the following afternoon an important and carefully planned conference was held in the sub-commissioner's room at Scotland Yard. Colonel Matterson himself was seated in his accustomed place at his desk. Inspector Pank, bearing his new dignity with great modesty but much pleasure, and Chief Inspector Smithers were also in evidence. There was a shorthand writer in the background.

An orderly brought in the usual slip of paper, and immediately afterwards Mr. Edwards was ushered in. He advanced a little dubiously into the room, but Colonel Matterson nodded in friendly fashion and pointed to a chair. The others wished him good afternoon. He was received as a visitor.

"I hoped you might come, Mr. Edwards," the sub-commissioner remarked.

"I was in two minds about it," the other admitted. "You gave me such a scare yesterday that I didn't know whether I was on my head or my heels. I even sent out this morning to see whether there was a boat leaving for the States."

"Yes, we heard of that," Matterson observed. "Your messenger fell down and was nearly run over going back to your office, and, after all, you found that you would have had to leave at eleven o'clock to catch the America at Southampton. It would not have been worth while, Mr. Edwards. We would have fetched you back if we had wanted you."

"I've been watched, then, have I?"

"Certainly you have. You are being watched, not as a criminal, but as a person who may be of use to us. We have still to find out one or two more things about Lord Edward Keynsham."

"You'll find out nothing against him," Mr. Edwards declared obstinately. "He is one of the most popular men in Norfolk. I can tell you that. He's one of the sort that couldn't do a mean action if he tried. If you brought me here to find out anything against his lordship you're barking up the wrong tree, sir. That's the truth."

THE sub-commissioner toyed with his monocle for a moment. He was looking at some notes on the table before him.

"Yesterday, Mr. Edwards," he said, looking up, "we took you by surprise. A few slight inaccuracies in your statements were excusable. Today you are being formally interrogated. You understand that?"

Edwards glanced at the shorthand writer in the corner.

"Yes, I understand," he admitted.

"I shall repeat a question I asked you yesterday, your answer to which was not convincing: Did Lord Edward confide to you in any way why he wanted this particular set made in your studio? He must have given you some reason."

"Well, of course he did. He told me that he wanted to frighten a nervous old gentleman into doing an act of justice."

"An act of justice, eh? So that's all you knew about it?"

"Every scrap."

"You didn't know who the nervous old gentleman was?"

"No idea."

"Have you ever thought about the affair since?"

"Could I help thinking about it?" Edwards demanded. "Here was I, practically a bankrupt, suddenly put on my legs with a thousand pounds in my pocket, and all my staff treated in the same fashion. Wasn't it likely I should think about it? There never was a queerer way of earning money in this world. I thought about it day and night."

"In the course of your reflections," Colonel Matterson continued, leaning back in his chair and balancing his finger-tips together, "did you happen to remember that a man was hanged on the day after that little show in your studio?"

(To be continued next week)

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Words and Music

Continued from page 28

by now. Particular praise was awarded the charm and originality of the music and lyrics. These, said the critics, had been written by two Columbia University students named Rodgers and Hart. This was not wholly correct inasmuch as both had left Columbia for the cold, cold world several years before. They did not, however, object to the classification. The important thing was that the Garrick Gaieties ran for nearly a year and the Rodgers-Hart team was besieged with offers to write for the Broadway producers who had received its talents so coldly a few years before.

Complicated rhyme schemes evolved by Hart were combined, in the Garrick Gaieties, with comparatively intricate harmonies composed by Dick Rodgers. This was new, a departure from the treacly verses and the saccharine tunes of old-line musical comedy. The Rodgers-Hart method is best illustrated by quoting a line or two. One hit of the Gaieties was a duet sung by a girl and boy. It was called "Manhattan" and it began as follows:

We'll have Manhattan,
The Bronx and Staten Island, too.
It's lovely going through the Zoo.
It's very fancy
On old Delancey Street, you know.
The subway charms one so
Where balmy breezes blow
To and fro.
And tell me what street
Compares with Mott Street in July,
Sweet pushcarts gently gliding by.
The great, big city's a wondrous toy,
Just made for a girl and boy.
We'll turn Manhattan into an isle of joy.

Music While You Wait

This song earned six or seven encores at every performance. The music, as well as the words, had humor and freshness. There were other songs with similarly novel touches; such was the number in which a love-sick juvenile proclaimed:

I must keep admirin'
Some pretty siren.

Or, if you prefer, another verse from Manhattan, which started:

We'll go to Greenwich
Where modern men itch to be free.

Solemn and sedate musical journals analyzed and dissected the music and lyrics of Rodgers and Hart and called attention to the extent to which each adorned the other. Their own explanation of their method is devoid of complications. If the number is one in which the words are more important, the words are written first and Rodgers then composes a tune. Hart writes a lyric to go with a melody when the melody is the thing which will hold the audience.

Both the composer and the lyricist are extremely facile. Rodgers has dashed to the theater, at the last moment, with a tune which is needed for the opening night. Hart can scribble a lyric, and has done so on occasion, amid the hurly-burly of backstage scene shifting.

The Garrick Gaieties started the deluge. A musical comedy called Dearest Enemy, which they had written the previous year and had hawked along Broadway in vain, was promptly produced. This ran for months and in 1926 was one of the four Rodgers-Hart shows on Broadway. In 1927 they had other productions in New York and had five playing in England—in London and the provinces. In 1928 they began to receive royalty checks from such far-off places as New Zealand and South Africa. These were from road shows using their songs and music. Meanwhile the contagion of tricky rhymes was spreading until no show was complete without them. Flo Ziegfeld summoned Rodgers and Hart. Finally Hollywood called for them and their earnings soared still more. Today the income of each is reported to be in excess of $100,000 annually.

Not Poor but Proud

This affluence is definitely pleasant, but the rags-to-riches theme is lacking in the stories of Lorenz Hart and Richard Rodgers. Hart, the lyricist, is the older. He was born in New York City on May 2, 1895, and attended private schools until he was ready for Columbia University in 1914. He enrolled in the School of Journalism for reasons which are still obscure to him; he had no desire to become a newspaper man. According to his own version he "majored in Varsity shows" while at Columbia. That is, he took comedy parts in several of these undergraduate productions. One time he was a skittish and, presumably, very funny old lady.

Rodgers was born, also in New York, on June 28, 1902. His family, like Hart's, was in comfortable circumstances. He was musically inclined from the time he was twelve or thirteen years old and at the age of sixteen had written a musical show scheduled to run, for sweet charity's sake, at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. The show limped. The first performance consumed six hours. Shortly before this time Rodgers had met Hart, and he decided to ask his advice.

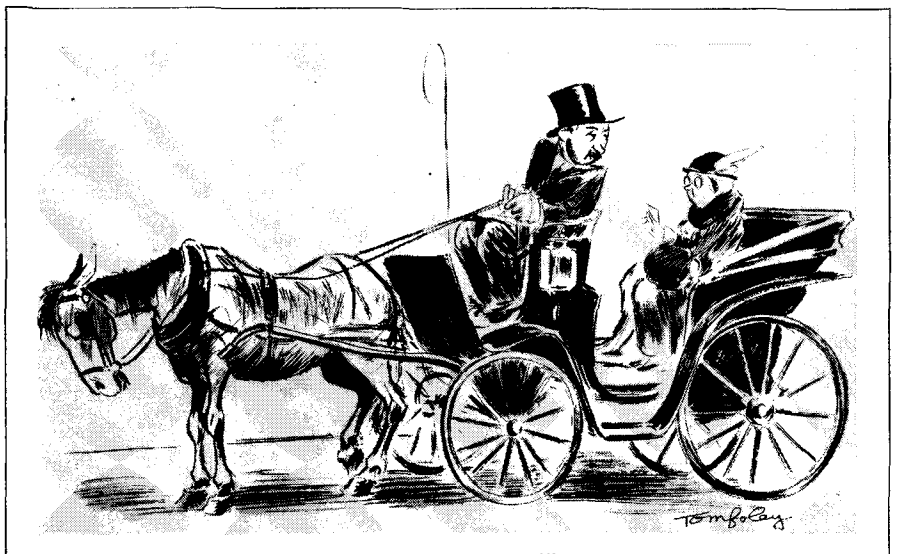
"It would be a good show," Hart said, "if you cut three hours of it."

This was the first Rodgers-Hart collaboration and it was successful. Subsequent performances, for the benefit of the Federation of Jewish Charities, were received with less suffering by the audience.

Dick Rodgers entered Columbia after Hart had left. The eligibility rules regarding Varsity shows are less strict than for Varsity football, however. Rodgers was allowed to call in Larry Hart, who was technically an alumnus, for the lyrics of the 1920 Varsity show and this extra-legal collaboration was repeated in 1921. When, that year, Rodgers left Columbia to enter the Institute of Musical Arts an informal agreement was made whereby the two decided to work together in the future. There was a third, equally important, member of the combine. This was Herbert Fields, the son of Lew Fields of Weber and Fields renown. He was also at Columbia University in those historic years and assisted in staging the Varsity shows which Rodgers and Hart wrote. He did the same thing for the Garrick Gaieties. Fields has written the books of many subsequent Rodgers-Hart shows.

The first years of the partnership were less than lucrative. Between 1922 and early 1925 they wrote the words and music for at least twenty-five amateur productions. They directed and rehearsed these shows and gratefully accepted the small fees offered.

They combined with Herbert Fields on a play, The Melody Man, which was a satire on Tin Pan Alley and had only an incidental song or two. This was ultimately produced and had a brief run, but it did not bear the name of any of the three young men. The author, according to the program, was Herbert Richard Lorenz. It does not appear that this nom de plume was penetrated or identified as the first names of Herbert Fields, Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart. The Garrick Gaieties came shortly after The Melody Man.



"No stunting, now!" *Tom Foley*

Like so many pairs who work together in harmony, Rodgers and Hart differ radically in temperament, taste and prejudices. In appearance their sole similarity is that both have dark hair and are rather small. Hart, however, is very much smaller—he is scarcely five feet tall—and his hair is much darker. If he inclines to be argumentative, it is only with respect to the theatrical, musical or motion picture subjects on which he has very definite ideas.

Hollywood Bound

Dick Rodgers is less argumentative and much less temperamental than his partner. Quiet and conservative in his tastes, he is married and lives, when in New York, near Park Avenue. Hart has thus far escaped domesticity and has a penthouse on upper Central Park West. He revels in hideously gaudy neckties and rarely bothers to have his suits pressed. He makes a great deal more noise than Rodgers but he is, on the whole, easily dominated.

The social preferences of Rodgers and Hart are just as far apart. The former gives somewhat formal dinner parties at which the conversation turns on the latest in books or music or, perhaps, the basic issues behind payment of the international debts. Hart enjoys large routs. The perfect gathering, in his mind, is a group of friends hastily summoned by telephone. At 11 o'clock chorus girls, singers, dancers and comedians from the current Broadway hits begin to drop in. A party which breaks up before dawn is a dismal failure to Larry Hart.

They went to Hollywood three years ago for a very definite reason: the remuneration was so high that they did not dare to reject the offer. They journeyed to the coast with reluctance, but they now plan to spend part of each year in Movieland. They have grown vastly excited over the potential blending of music and the moving picture. This was not apparent on their first visit.

They were received with flourishes and ceremony, as befitted a team which had turned out a dozen Broadway smashes in three or four years. They arrived just as the movie industry, rallying from the calamitous advent of the talkies, was busily photographing entire musical comedies. Tin Pan Alley and its song pluggers had been shipped in a body from Times Square. Rodgers and Hart, their eyes popping, were shown row after row of tiny cubicles in which these artists were sweating and attempting to do their stuff.

Coast-to-Coast Commuters

No such meager quarters were assigned to the new arrivals, however. They were given a luxurious office and a beautiful secretary. Their first picture would be The Hot Heiress, they were informed, and they were told to take their time. Hollywood had confidence in them. They did their best. When Rodgers had composed a tune he was assured that it was excellent, excellent. Certain changes might have to be made "because you don't understand the camera, old boy," but he had nothing to worry about. Hart, having turned out a lyric, met with similar obstacles. The movie magnates were, though, delighted with their work. Negotiations were started for a four-year contract at a figure which still makes them gasp. The papers were being drawn up when a telegram arrived from New York.

"No more musical comedies," this read.

Both Rodgers and Hart thought that The Hot Heiress was pretty bad, musically as well as pictorially. They turned eastward with relief and soon were busy on Broadway once more, this time with The Connecticut Yankee. Then came a second offer from Hollywood. Things had changed, they were assured. Musical comedies were no longer being transferred to the screen, but pictures with a musical background were being made. Would they return and work on a vehicle for Maurice Chevalier? They did so and were elated to find that the promises were kept.

The director assigned to the Chevalier picture was Rouben Mamoulian, who had been director of productions at the Eastman Theater at Rochester, New York, and who had put on Porgy, the Negro play, for the Theater Guild. Rodgers and Hart found that Mamoulian was intelligent, sympathetic and cooperative. He was groping toward a new art—a motion picture in which music would serve to give background to the play, would help to tell the story, would supply atmosphere. The Chevalier picture, called Love Me Tonight, is one of the few adult pictures among the thousands which have poured out of Hollywood. More important, it has been financially successful too. It has played to vast audiences in the United States. It has been shown in Vienna and Paris.

It was after the completion of Love Me Tonight that the partners became

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enthusiastic about working for the movies. They were assigned to a second picture, The Phantom President, which was less successful. But then they began work on a film for Al Jolson and this, they feel sure, will give some idea of what they have in mind. Even the dialogue is partly in rhyme. The songs grow out of the dialogue and, of course, out of the plot. For instance: in one sequence Jolson is playing the part of a young Negro boy who, while walking down the street, finds a gold watch. He picks it up and holds it to his ear. A grin breaks over his face.

"Tick, tick, tick," he whispers. "Ain't that slick?"

At this point the orchestra takes up the "tick, tick, tick" theme and a song begins. Rodgers and Hart were given full rein in developing the picture. The directors and the producers listened to their ideas. On their part, they made an intensive study of motion picture technique. They studied lighting and spent hours in the cutting-rooms and sound laboratories. They are now at work on a third picture.

Rodgers and Hart will, however, return to Broadway from time to time and will continue to write the musical shows which first brought them fame. They refuse to sign any long contracts with the movie potentates. They are engaged for a single picture each time and then are free to do what they like. For the movies, despite their magnificent possibilities, remain clouded in uncertainty. Rodgers and Hart cannot forget their first session with Mamoulian as the Chevalier film got under way. The director had approved their suggestions and had pledged his support.

"Do you mean to say," asked Rodgers in astonishment, "that someone won't poke his head in that door during the next ten minutes and tell us we're crazy, throw us out?"

Mamoulian said that they were safe for this particular job. He made no guarantees for the future.

She warned him First

Continued from page 21

thinking that she had more intelligence than most of them.

Usually he spent his evenings in his room over the Randall garage and in the safe and congenial company of the trigonometry textbook he was writing. Tonight, instead, he dressed and went back to the club. It would be amusing, he thought, to talk to her, to keep an understanding eye on her calmly intelligent pursuit of Sam Ludlow; there might be a chance to help a little. If he could, he decided, he would.

HE CUT in on Sam with a sense of crafty benevolence. Sam was simple enough to react to even this thin semblance of competition. Peter steered for the French windows that opened on the seaward terrace. He was quite sure that Sam's eye followed them with faintly aggrieved interest. They went out into a bland night. There was a hint of impatience in Nora's voice:

"Why did you pretend to be afraid?"

"I wasn't pretending," Peter said. "I believe in being afraid, that's all. I can't see anything admirable in the kind of folly that takes unnecessary risks."

"But there wasn't any risk, and you knew it."

"There's always a risk in a long swim in open water, especially when other people are along. If any one of us three had a cramp, for instance, it might very easily mean that none of us came back alive."

She didn't answer at once. It was too dark to see her face clearly but he knew, somehow, that it studied him with curiosity rather than contempt. This girl had a real mind; she didn't jump at obvious conclusions.

"That wasn't your real reason."

"It was one of them." Peter was delighted by her disbelief; it moved him to a frankness he would usually have avoided. "I don't see the sense of going out of my way to run even a little risk of drowning, and I also have a prejudice against the type of exhibitionism that goes in for that sort of thing for the sake of showing off, especially when the danger is nothing but a counterfeit. As you say, there wasn't enough real danger in that swim to bother about. It was just one of our nice, safe, synthetic adventures, with the risks eliminated."

She laughed quietly but did not speak. Peter was encouraged to go on:

"Pink adventures for pale people! Be a hero by our new scientific method, absolutely without risk or pain! No, thanks. I'm not having any."

"I see what you mean." She paused. "It makes me think of what Voltaire said about marriage."

"What did he say?" Peter's education had carefully shunned the non-mathematical.

"He called it the only adventure open to the coward."

Peter knew exactly what was in her mind. With the best of intentions he had done her a disservice. Till this evening she had been able to find, in the idea of marrying Sam Ludlow, a redeeming element of drama; she had seen herself playing the exciting rôle of the bold, crafty, scheming adventuress. He'd spoiled that idea for her. She was seeing this marriage as nothing but one of the pink, painless adventures as to which he and Voltaire were in cynical agreement. He made eager haste to undo his mischief.

"That's just another way of saying marriage isn't an adventure at all," he said.

"No?" There was interest in her voice. Peter guessed that she wanted to be convinced.

"Of course it isn't! Think it over, and you can't help seeing that it's the antithesis of adventure. It's an invention to take the hazards out of the process of keeping the planet populated. It's a fairly scientific device for making the relations between men and women and children as safe and certain and conventional as possible. Its whole purpose is to minimize risk and insecurity. Looking for adventure in it is just as absurd as—as putting your savings in a bank and then hoping it'll fail!"

She took time to think it over. "I suppose you're right," she said.

"You know I'm right. You've got that kind of a mind."

"Have I?" She laughed. "Let's go in, then. We might be running a risk, out here, of catching cold."

He understood, easily enough. She couldn't help seeing that he was right, and she'd made up her mind, sensibly, to carry on. He was glad of it. He was glad when Sam Ludlow cut in, before they had taken three steps. He stood at the wall for a while, and then went back to the room above the garage with a kind of Boy Scout feeling of having done a reasonable and good deed.

HE DID another one, next morning. Again, instead of joining the group at the foot of the bathhouse steps, Nora chose to sit alone. Peter went and sat beside her. Little things counted, he told himself; Sam's reflexes would react in only one way to this appearance of continued competition.

It wasn't as if there was any danger in keeping up these good works, either. Peter saw this quite clearly. No matter how much time he might spend in Nora Finley's company he couldn't get sentimental about her and, even if he did, it wouldn't matter, because there wasn't a chance on earth of her ever getting sentimental about him.

"I've been thinking a lot about what you said last night," she told him.

"About the nice, safe, modern substitutes for danger?"

"No. About marriage."

Peter nodded approvingly. He felt safer than ever. Here was a girl who didn't beat coyly about bushes. She talked and thought in a straight line.

"Well?" he prompted, as she paused.

"I can't see why I never realized before that all the usual ideas about it are just sentimental rubbish. It never occurred to me that Voltaire's epigram was anything except a—a cheap vaudeville wise-crack. I've clung to a stupid notion that it was a lottery, a desperately risky gamble in the dark."

"I'M SORRY I was the one to spoil your bright young illusions," Peter said. "Now you'll always hate me, I suppose."

"No. I'll always be grateful." She spoke with a soberness that made Peter dimly ashamed of his flippancy. "You see, the thought of marriage has always frightened me a little. I've imagined it as something mysterious and terrible, like dying—something that might be splendid and glorious or ghastly, horrible. I'd find out afterwards."

Peter nodded. "That's the wicked part of it. Those old fictions persuade us that it's an adventure, and therefore that it's no use trying to apply reason to it. It's a leap in the dark, they tell us, so what's the good of trying to see where we'll land? No wonder so many people come to grief when five minutes of elementary thinking would have told them exactly what was going to happen."

She let a handful of sand sift through her fingers. Peter could follow the thought behind her grave eyes. He would have elaborated on his theme if Sam Ludlow, swathed in the striped bathrobe, had not chosen this moment to arrive.

Generously, after his gracious habit, Sam took upon himself, at once, the major burden of the conversation. Peter could lie back on the warm sand and watch Nora's face. She listened to Sam with the rapt attention to which he was of right accustomed, but in her look Peter found a quality of inspection. He was fairly sure that, thanks to him, she was considering Sam, not as a comrade in mysterious and perilous adventure, but as a possible companion on a safe journey, over smooth and traveled roads, to a known destination. Again, as she ran lightly down toward the surf with Sam bounding magnificently beside her, Peter felt himself entitled to that pleasant Boy Scout sense of worthy service, unselfishly and cleverly performed.

(Continued on page 46)

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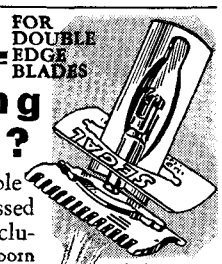

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(Continued from page 45)

He found plenty of chances to enjoy the feeling before July had worn thin. Almost every morning he met Sam and Nora on the beach; he saw them again in the afternoon at the Tennis Club; he went to the Wednesday and Saturday dances. And whenever he met them it was possible to provide a little of the competition upon which romance and trade are supposed to thrive. Also, developing a sudden taste for his society, George and Bessie Worrell took to asking him to dinner and to insisting, with their breezy, Mid-Western joviality, on his dropping in for late-afternoon cocktails.

Peter got a lot of sardonic amusement out of accepting those invitations, out of acting as if he didn't know who inspired them, or why. It was a comedy, he told himself, a cynical, sophisticated, subtle little drama, in which his own part was altogether to his taste. It was good fun to let Nora Finley imagine that she was fooling him as completely as between them they were fooling Sam Ludlow.

Sometimes Peter was almost sorry for Sam, slowly coming face to face with the shocking idea that he was in conflict for a lady's regard with a lowly, thousand-dollar-a-year tutor in a dinky fresh-water college. He couldn't blame Sam, though, for believing this. If he hadn't been extraordinarily clear-eyed Peter might almost have believed it himself.

As it was, he enjoyed it. For the first time he was able to feel absolutely safe in feminine society. It might never happen to him again, and he joyously made the most of it. Conscience, to be sure, reproached him for wasting his evenings on dancing and bridge and backgammon, on idle talk, on the crude, romping hilarity of the charades to which the Worrells were pathetically addicted, but he was able to take, in self-defense, almost a Sydney Carton tone. It was a far, far better thing, he informed Conscience, to help a girl like Nora Finley make her future secure and safe, than to write a dozen trigonometry textbooks, and if Conscience didn't like it, why Conscience could go and jump off the dock.

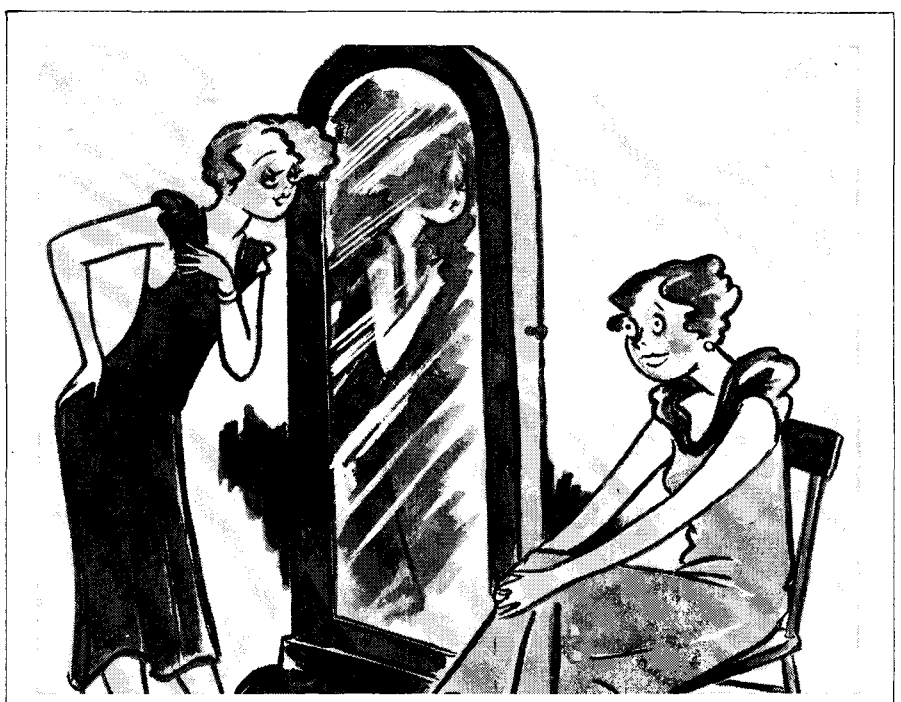
IT PROVED to be a very satisfying summer. Besides the constant sense of rendering a knightly service, besides the comfortable feeling of guile and craft and cunning, besides the lovely certainty that he was decently modern and sophisticated and cynical, Peter discovered that he was actually having what people of simpler minds described as a good time. He was really getting fun out of silly games with cards and dice, out of dancing and idle chatter, out of absurd charades and long, midnight motor rides to nowhere in particular and back.

Most of all and best of all, though, it was fun to play around with Nora Finley. Peter had always suspected that going about with girls would be amusing, even for a person of his complete enlightenment. He had always known better than to experiment, however. Your reflexes—and the girl's—were always in ambush, waiting to catch your wits off guard. Before you knew it you'd stop playing and be stickily, soppily *in earnest, or else the girl would* be, or—and this was horribly apt to happen—you both got that way at once.

None of these disasters could possibly happen here. The better he came to know Nora, the surer Peter was that she wasn't dangerous. Nothing would ever make her lose her head about anybody. She'd always know exactly what she was doing and she'd always have a valid and considered reason for doing it. And nobody could be moonstruck about her, either—nobody, that is, who realized that she was coldly, icily intelligent and absolutely immune to sentiment. Of course if you were too thick to see what she was really like you might go crazy about her, especially if she wanted you to and did her clever utmost to make sure that you did.

As to Sam Ludlow, her best was fully good enough. Peter came to be almost sorry for Sam, visibly abject, visibly bewildered by the discovery that he could love a mere girl as intensely as he loved himself, and dumfounded, aghast, to find that the girl didn't seem to realize the breath-stopping miracle of good luck that had happened to her.

IT WAS sound policy, Peter admitted, to keep Sam guessing. The more he suffered now the happier he'd be afterwards. There wasn't any real reason to be sorry for him. He'd always be happy. Nora was clever enough to see that making him happy was the surest way of making her own life comfortable and serene and safe. All the same, he kept on being sorry for Sam, and as the summer faded gently into September haze, he began to be angry at Nora.



"Boy! Am I French! I'm astin' ya?" *Bo Brown*

It was high time for the comedy to end, as even modern, satiric comedies ought to end, in the traditional banalities of a happy curtain. It was cruel and dangerous and silly to prolong Sam Ludlow's mystified suspense, to keep on pretending that Peter Olney was seriously in the running. Peter went to the last of the club dances with his mind made up to end his own part in the masquerade and to tell Nora exactly what he thought about the way she was overplaying hers.

She was dancing with Sam when Peter came in. Behind Sam's shoulder her hand moved in a barely perceptible gesture that commanded Peter to cut in. He frowned as he obeyed; he frowned again when Nora suggested going out on the terrace, but he went.

There was a pale starlight and a lingering of summer in the still air. Below the railing the black water moved swiftly seaward in the eager hurry of the ebb.

"This really isn't necessary, you know."

Peter caught just the right key of lightly cynical detachment. This was his last scene and its honors fairly belonged to him. He was sorry that there wasn't more light. He wanted to see Nora's astonishment when she found out that he hadn't been a duped instrument in her clever hands but a consenting, shrewd and sardonically amused accomplice. Suddenly, too, he wanted to see her disappointment. He almost wanted her to be hurt.

"And it isn't wise, either," he went on, "or safe."

"There are no gods but Wisdom and Safety," Nora chanted mockingly, "and Peter Olney is their prophet."

Peter kept his temper with an effort. It was his scene. She wasn't going to steal it by making him angry.

"And Nora Finley is a True Believer," he countercharged. She turned toward him so quickly that, although he couldn't see her face, he knew that it looked startled.

"What makes you say that, Peter?" There was no longer any levity in her voice. "You don't think it, do you? You just said—"

"I said it wasn't safe or sensible for us to be out here," he interrupted. "It isn't. It's particularly foolish because we both know better, and because it might very easily throw away what we've both been working for all summer."

"I don't believe I understand that." She spoke very quietly. Peter chuckled.

"You mean you didn't think I understood," he said. "You mean you took it for granted that I didn't know I was acting as second bowstring. It never occurred to you, did it, that I might be deliberately helping you to marry Sam Ludlow?"

THERE was a little silence. Peter could hear the surf and the nearer murmur of the tide against the pier. Then Nora said: "So you knew, all the time!"

"Of course I knew." Peter was still angry. Somehow the scene wasn't as satisfying as he had expected it to be. "You don't imagine, do you, that I'm simple enough to have thought for a minute that—that—" he knew that his voice was too loud and heavy for light comedy but he seemed unable, at the moment, to control it—"that there was any danger of—"

"I see. As long as you were quite sure about that, it was perfectly safe for you to—to play around with me. That's why you did it. There wasn't any—danger."

Peter fairly pounced on the word: "No. There wasn't any danger—for either of us. None of the nice, safe danger that makes it so easy to be a hero! The kind of danger you find when you drive fearlessly past one of those highway signboards that say 'Passable but Unsafe—Proceed at Your Own Risk'—the kind of danger that turns out to be just ruts and mud and bumps and second speed! If I'd been a great-hearted, valiant soul I wouldn't have been a bit afraid of falling in love with you and persuading you to be a heroine, too, and come and live with me on a thousand a year! You're absolutely right. If there'd been any of that brand of danger, I'd have been afraid of it!"

"You're right," she said. "You're always right, Peter. Don't come with me. Good-by."

She turned away, but instead of going back through the glazed door to sanity and safety and Sam Ludlow, she crossed the flagstones toward the gateway beside the clubhouse. Peter ran after her.

"Where are you going?"

"You wouldn't be interested. It's too silly." She took the path which twisted between the high sand dunes toward the beach. Peter caught her arm and she jerked it free.

"Listen, Nora—"

She ran from him. The last and highest of the dunes had hidden her before he could overtake her and when he reached the beach the pale starlight gave him no sight of her. He called. There wasn't any answer. He ran, by force of habit, toward the vague silhouette of the bathhouses. A door closed and the sound made his heart jump with an utterly absurd relief.

"Don't be a fool, Nora! Come on back."

SHE didn't answer. He waited, fuming, till he caught sight of the white swimming suit as she came out of the inky shadow. He ran toward her, but she danced away before him, across the sand and into the wavering silver of the surf. Suddenly he knew that she was *going* to swim out to the buoy at Half-Mile Ledge.

"Don't, Nora! It's crazy! At night, against this tide—"

"Just a pink adventure, Peter," she called back. "There's no real danger. Nothing but trouble and tiredness."

He found that he had kicked off his shoes, thrown off his coat, that he was swimming furiously after her, so warm with helpless anger that he scarcely felt the warning bite of the water. His clothes hampered him so that she kept easily ahead of him. She beat him to the buoy by fifty strokes. He found her clinging to it and laughing—laughing, he somehow knew, not at her own folly, but at him.

"You little fool!" He laid angry hands on the iron. "What made you do it? What—"

"That isn't the mystery, Peter. I did it because I'm a little fool. I'm not sensible, like you. I'm just dumb enough to like my adventures nice and pink. I'm so simple I can get a big thrill out of dangers that aren't anything but tiredness and trouble. The real mystery is why you came along, Peter. You knew you didn't have to. You knew there wasn't any danger, really. You knew that the safe, sane, sensible thing for you to do would be to stay on the nice, comfortable dry land and wait till I came back to call me names. What made you do it, Peter? What made you?"

"I—" Peter stopped. Suddenly, aghast, horror-stricken, he knew exactly why he had come, knew the immensity, the perfection of his folly. His hands closed hard upon wet, seacold shoulders. Nora's hand was pressed against his mouth.

"Passable," she was saying solemnly, "but Unsafe! Years and years, Peter, of ruts and bumps! Proceed at Your Own Risk!"

He heard himself laughing as, in the face of the warning, he proceeded.

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Amateur Bride

Continued from page 17

"In that case," said Flint, "there's an initiation fee of a hundred dollars."

"A hundred dollars!" gasped Morton. "It's the coolest holdup I've ever run into, bar one—and I'm not thinking of Yaquis either."

"We spent a good deal on these tricky little furnishings," said Flint patiently, "and initiation fees are our only chance to get the money back."

"I don't want to buy in," said Morton; "I'll rent a chair."

"We don't rent, lend or give," said Flint, his voice beginning to harden. "Nobody cares a whoop what you're doing here, but whatever it is, you'll do it in our way or you'll do it outside."

"Did every man in this room pay his hundred?"

"Yes."

"THEN it ought to be worth it," said Morton. He started to draw a wallet from his breast pocket, glanced around suspiciously and thrust it back. Instead he took out a gold cigarette case, opened it and extracted a neatly folded hundred-dollar bill which he passed to Flint. "That's what I call my safety last."

"In that case," said Flint, puffing hard at his pipe, "don't you think it would be just as well to save it for other expenses?"

"Don't worry," said Morton; "I can pay my way. What's the matter with you fellows, anyway? You know the sort of thing I had to plow through to get to this bald-headed top of nowhere and you treat me as if I'd brought smallpox into your happy home."

"It's just that you strike us as a pretty cool customer," said Flint; "cooler than we're used to."

"If you're hinting you prefer my room to my company," said Morton promptly, "I might as well tell you I've run away for the last time. You can all go to hell whenever you feel like it."

Several of the men half rose but Flint raised a restraining hand.

"And you might as well know," said Flint, puffing harder than ever, "that we don't pull any rough talk in front of Meg here. Being what we are and where we are we try to keep as decent as we can, according to our own private lights."

"I'm sorry I broke that rule," said Morton, "and I apologize."

He took his glass and went to seat himself at one of the side tables where he could keep an eye on Wright, the door and the bar. Flint, his brow corrugated in a frown, followed his movements with impatience, and as soon as he was settled, tapped sharply on the counter with the bowl of his pipe.

"This meeting will now come to order," he announced. "Under the circumstances, I feel obliged to make certain explanatory remarks. Up here we have a few ideas of our own—just a very few since, in the nature of things, you can't lug your heavy artillery to the Dos Picos."

"I'll swear to that," said Morton pleasantly.

"For one thing," continued Flint, his cheek bones showing pink above his beard, "we can hardly be expected to subject cherished wives to a journey through the Yaqui country—the mortality would be too high."

"A point I wouldn't advertise," murmured Morton.

"Supposing we had any," concluded Flint sharply. "The outside world," he went on, "having a lot of material, can marry and divorce at its convenience. We are differently placed."

"If you don't mind, Flint," muttered Bower, "I'd rather hear Bingo go on with his song."

"In a manner of speaking," proceeded Flint, ignoring the interruption, "we uphold the outside world in the more modern aspects of its views. We contend that a woman consecrated by church and state to the uses of two, three, four or sometimes five men is just as good, bad, tall, short, long and wide as she who after our simple ceremony bestows her devotion on six or sixteen, one at a time. One improvement only do we lay claim to and that is the abolishment of the interloper. Here the state, small as it is, has and exercises the power to guarantee domestic peace for the full term of the contract against any form of outside interference."

"Hear! Hear!" murmured Morton.

Flint turned on him. "Now, Mister—"

"Morton."

"Thanks. My name's Flint. I'm the treasurer of the Dos Picos and because I'm sixty years old I'm also the custodian of this key." He dangled a large key attached by a string to his little finger. "You see this key, Mr. Morton? It's our custom to auction it off every Thursday evening. We do it that way for the sake of old romance and because, even up here, a man likes to fool himself with emblems."

"What's the key good for?" asked Morton curiously.

"It's good for a look-in in the other side of paradise," shouted Brown, striking a discordant chord on the piano. "A look-in! A look-in!"

"It has the usual properties of a door key, Mr. Morton," said Flint. "In other words, it opens a door. The terms for all bids are spot cash at the tap of my pipe. A key—a common thirty-cent key. Are you ready, gentlemen?"

MEG looked shrewdly at each man, finally fastening her eyes on Bower.

"Ready, now," said Flint. "What am I offered?"

The opening bid came from the youngster Smith: "Twenty-five dollars."

"Thirty dollars, my watch and my setter dog," offered his boon companion, Brown.

"Fifty," muttered Bower.

Brown whirled on the piano stool, leaned far forward and challenged Smith; they made a hasty single throw of the dice. "One minute," called Smith. He had won Brown's thirty and added it to his own modest hoard. "Fifty-five!"

"I'm offered fifty-five," said Flint, raising his pipe in a gesture that was meant to be derisive. "Fifty-five, once!"

"One hundred," said Matlock in a cool voice.

Smith sank back. "Good night!"

Bower's eyes were locked in Meg's. "One hundred and five," he murmured.

"Sorry, Bill," said Matlock, in an aside, "but you know I'm leaving in a couple of weeks." Then he placed his bid, "Two hundred."

Bower put his fingers to his neck and pulled at the soft collar of his shirt as if it were choking him. "Two hundred and ten."

"For this small key," said Flint, between puffs from his pipe, "I'm offered in cash, here and now, two hundred and ten dollars."

"And fifty," said Matlock.

Without freeing his gaze, imprisoned deep in Meg's eyes, Bower took out his roll and began fingering it nervously. "Seventy-five."

(Continued on page 48)

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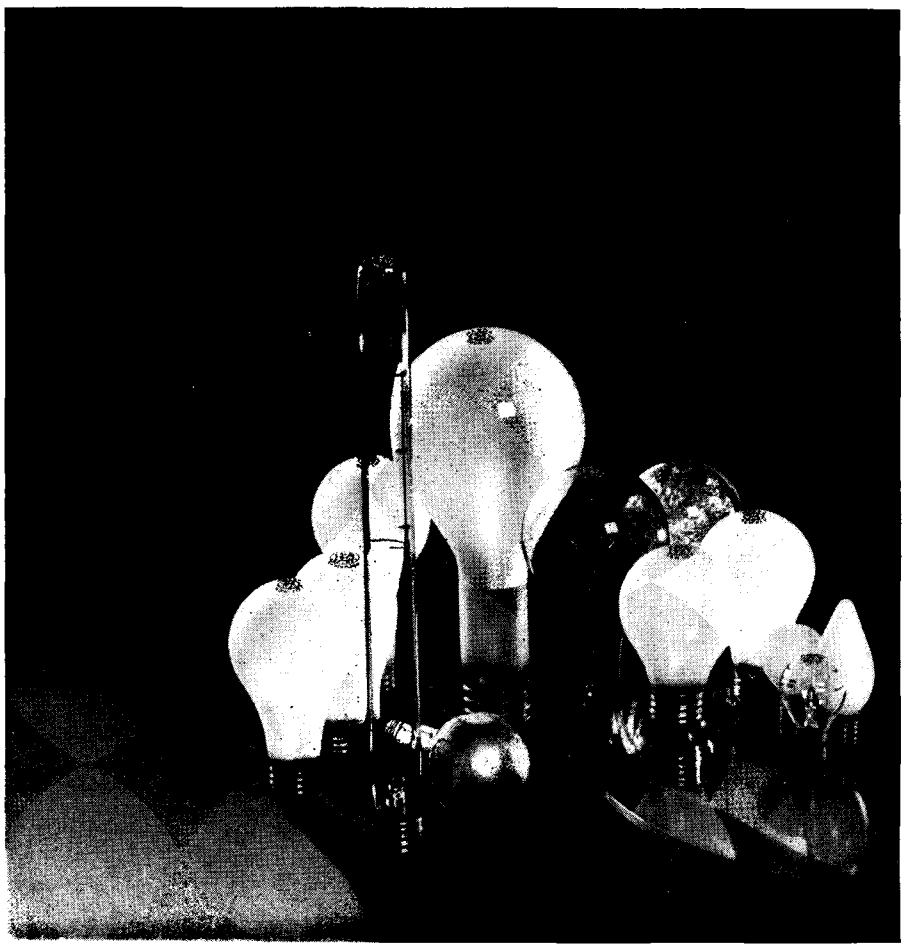

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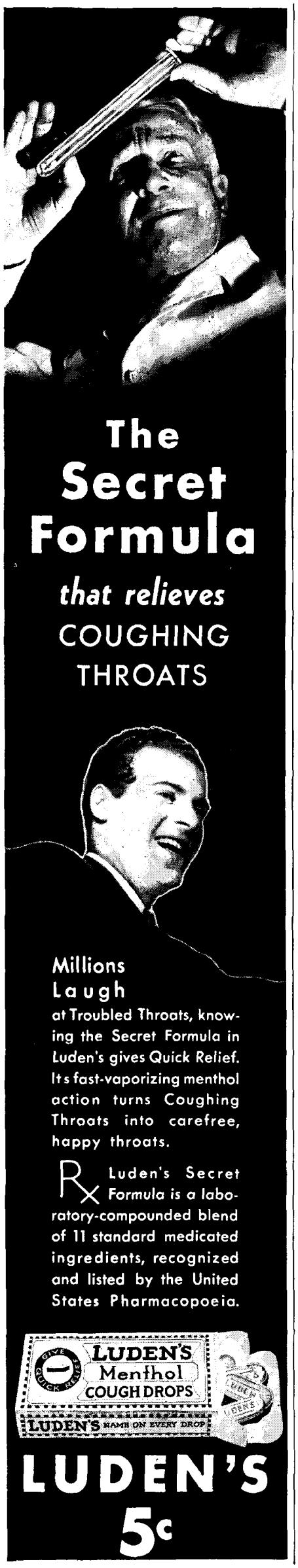
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(Continued from page 47)

"Two hundred and seventy-five for a worn key," said Flint. "Any advance?"

By this time the attention of everybody in the room had become fixed on the two remaining contestants.

"Three hundred," said Matlock.

Bower, angry and unstrung, slammed his wad on the table before him. "Three hundred and fifty," he shouted with a break in his voice. "I was a fool not to bring more, but that's all I've got. It's never gone over three hundred before!"

Meg laughed a sudden loud laugh. Bower wrenched his eyes away from her, dropped his head in his hands and slumped down on the table in front of him. Everybody was staring at his crumpled figure, Matlock and Flint included, when the door of Meg's room noiselessly opened from the inside and closed again. Meg sank out of sight from her high chair, but it was as though she had not moved, for Margaret Wright sat in her place. Where there had been a blonde in a red and white gingham dress, there was now a brunette in blue and white checks.

"So that's your limit, is it?" said Matlock, his eyes still on Bower. "Sorry, old man, but here goes. Three hundred and fifty-one."

FLINT reached out his pipe, ready to tap the counter. Wright, realizing the sport was over, was on the point of drowsing. Morton, the first to let his eyes wander, suddenly beheld Margaret. He could neither speak nor move, so violent was the blow to his senses. He had come here to find her. He had had every reason to expect this moment, but in so different a form that his brain refused to believe what his eyes saw. In a flash he argued with his own brain. He reminded it that he had bribed a confidential agent to betray his trust and had otherwise spent money like water; that he had risked his life; that he had thought of nothing but this meeting for three days and the greater part of as many nights. All in vain—he could not believe the incredible.

"You have heard the bid," said Flint as a matter of form. "Three hundred and fifty-one dollars for this thirty-cent key. Going, once! Going, twice!"

"Four hundred," said Morton in a choked voice.

As though electrified the room came to life; even Bower raised his head. Wright came awake, sat up, pushed back his hat and laughed silently in enjoyment at the thought of Morton falling for Meg. For an instant he had an odd feeling of oneness with Margaret, wishing she might be present to share the joke. Matlock stared at Morton, then smiled good-naturedly as he turned his head slowly to look at Meg and offer his homage to her as a fast and efficient worker. He beheld Margaret. First came astonishment and then a sudden gripping of his heart. He was caught, and knew it. The look in the dark eyes of this stranger was the same with which Meg had dragged Bower over the brink of despair.

As for Margaret, she was trembling within though she gave no outward sign. She had had plenty of time to think. From behind Meg's door she had first attended the arrival of Morton and then heard the name of Wright. She did not think of them as husband and defaulting lover, but as two men—enemies delivered into her hands. Her eyes flamed. Meg, looking up at her from the low chair behind the bar, was bewildered and dumfounded.

"You have the money with you, Mr. Morton?" asked Flint coldly.

Morton had recovered his voice. "I have."

"In cash? Nothing else goes here."

"Gold certificates of the United States Treasury. Is that good enough for you?"

"Gentlemen," said Flint, "I announce the last bid. Four hundred dollars. Any advance?"

"A pippin!" suddenly shrieked young Smith, "a bright new pippin!"

Brown followed the line of his friend's wild gaze.

"Oh, Mamma, hear my prayer!" he shouted. "Bring me money—all the money in the world!"

"Order!" bellowed Flint, totally at a loss as to the cause of the commotion. "Order!"

"Five hundred," said Matlock in a clear voice.

"Stop!"

THE word came like a crash of thunder from the depths of the room. John Wright had sprung to his feet and was plowing forward, toppling the chairs and tables in his way.

"Six hundred!" said Morton quickly.

"Shut up, damn you!" thundered Wright, continuing to advance.

Flint slipped from his stool with the smoothness of a great cat. "One minute, John. You know the rules."

"Rules be damned! You—"

"One more curse," interrupted Flint, "and out you go. The only thing that can talk rough here is ready cash."

Wright glared in desperation right and left; he looked anywhere except at Margaret.

"You poor fools! Only one of you knows what he's doing and I'll tend to him when I'm ready. I warn you there's going to be just one more bid and I'm going to make it."

"One thousand dollars," said Morton, rising and bracing himself as he spoke.

Wright started forward murderously, but Flint caught his wrist, whipped up his arm and gave it a twist. "John, do you want me to pull you to pieces?" he said in a low voice. "Are you trying to force me to throw you out?"

"You don't understand, Flint," said Wright thickly, struggling for self-control. "That woman—"

Releasing his hold, Flint whirled around and stared. So this was what had started all the fuss! He gulped, unable to speak at once. Then he coughed, striving to draw Margaret's attention from Matlock. Finally he managed to say in the voice of authority, "Excuse me, Miss; we are not acquainted."

MARGARET slowly withdrew her eyes from Matlock and moved them to Flint's face. "My name is Margaret," she said with a calm that amazed Morton and even sobered Wright. "But you can all call me Meg because I'm taking Meg's place."

"You mean you've bought the bar?"

"Yes."

"Do you understand what's going on here?"

"Of course."

"Pardon me another question," persisted Flint. "Have you ever done anything like this before?"

"Yes—once."

"She lies," said Wright, his eyes wide with amazement.

He was in torment. At the instant of recognizing Margaret he had started to shout out that she was his wife. Then something had stopped him as surely as if a gag had been thrust down his throat. What was it? Why? Because this wasn't Margaret Schuyler. It was a woman, any woman, woman as the eternal abstract. The chances were that she would have denied his assertion, and with Morton there, ready to back her in any outrage, he might easily have become the laughingstock of the ages. No—it was terrible enough as it was, but even this was better than that!

"Who do you think you are?" yelled Bower suddenly. "And what about you, Flint? If you're getting too old for your job I suggest we throw you both out and down the hill."

Meantime Matlock, released from his thrall, had gone to the bar for a dice box and returned to place it before Bower. Bower nodded. Having made his speech, he turned back to the table. They began to throw for his three hundred and fifty dollars.

Matlock lost. He offered to double the stakes. Bower accepted, his eyes beginning to light with a new dream. Matlock won and began to count his gains in addition to all the cash he had had on his person, flipping the notes with nervous fingers. Smith came hurrying over to him.

"Here you are, Larry," he said thrusting forward his fifty-five dollars. "Never mind throwing for it; you haven't got time."

"One thousand dollars," intoned Flint.

"Ten hundred and fifty," called Matlock; then, snatching at Smith's offering, he corrected himself: "No, no, I mean one thousand one hundred and five."

"Larry!" groaned Wright. "Larry! You don't know—"

Brown began pounding the piano madly, threw back his head and sang:

"The gold is on the mountain, the mountain, the mountain!
The gold is on the mountain, while I am on the hill!"

"Shut up!" shouted Flint. "What was that last bid, Larry?"

"Thirteen hundred," said Morton.

WRIGHT whirled on him and in one rhythmic movement sent his fist crashing to the side of his jaw. Morton twirled on one heel like a spinning top; then his knees sagged and he sank in a crumpled heap. Wright pounced on him, snatched the wallet from his pocket and faced about.

"Well, Flint," he said, "since you're such a stickler for rules, have I got the cash or haven't I? Now, damn you all—bid!" He slammed the wallet on the counter in front of Flint and laid on top of it a miserable ten-dollar bill. "Thirteen hundred and ten."

"I'm through," Matlock declared in a clear voice.

Flint, back on his stool, raised the key on high. "Going, once! Going, twice! Sold to Mr. John Wright at thirteen hundred and ten dollars when I count the money." He put his pipe back between his teeth, flipped open the wallet and thrust his fingers into one of its well-filled compartments. Instantly all movement of his hands was arrested. His pipe fell from between his loosened jaws to the counter and rolled from there to the floor. Only his heavy eyebrows moved; they twitched spasmodically, one high and arched, the other low. "Take a brace on yourself, John."

"Brace, nothing!" said Wright truculently. "Give me that key and you and the rest of you clear out."

"Have a look for yourself, John," said Flint quietly. "The Yaquis may not have robbed our friend Morton, but the men with him evidently did." Before the eyes of all he emptied the wallet of two wads of newspaper cut to the shape of bank notes.

"It's a trick," whispered Wright, his eyes staring as if they never again would close, "and you were in on it!"

"I'll forgive that, John," said Flint, his eyes suddenly diminishing to pinpoints, "under the circumstances."

Matlock had sprung to his feet; he now came forward. "My last bid was eleven hundred and five," he stated. "Here's the cash."

(To be continued next week)

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You Can't Marry Two Men

Continued from page 10

"Have to," said Tom. "You see, Ruth, we can't go on forever. If we're both away—maybe you could make up your mind. You certainly don't seem able to make it up while we're here. And we both feel that it wouldn't be fair for one of us to stay here. So—we're both going."

"And that's that, eh?" she said.

They nodded again.

"And while you're away I'm supposed to make up my mind?"

For the third time they nodded.

"But I can't bear it," she exploded. "What will I do without you boys? It—it's dreadful. I'll miss you so much."

"And maybe you'll miss one of us more," suggested Bill. "And all you need to do is cable—clients or patients: the discard for them. Now, let's dance."

THEY both took her home, announced that they were taking her to the theater tomorrow night, and solemnly departed.

She went, with equal solemnity, to bed. But not to sleep. This was the most ridiculous thing she'd ever heard of. Bill and Tom *both* leaving her! It couldn't be. And yet she knew that it would be. When Bill and Tom made up their minds, there was slight chance of changing them. When both of them determined on a course armies could not divert them.

For the millionth time she asked herself what was the matter with her? Here were two charming men, eligible in every possible way. She could never care for anyone else. Her husband *had* to be one of these two. But—again—which?

And light suddenly came to her. If she couldn't tell which one she cared more for, she might be able to discover if she could tell which one cared more for her.

She telephoned Doctor Tom next morning and invited herself to luncheon. Then she phoned Lawyer Bill and asked him in for tea. At one-thirty, radiant, she met Tom. She felt that solution of her difficulty lay ahead of her. And she banished all signs of radiance as Tom encountered her at the door of the Embassy.

"Thought old Carey was a grouch," said Tom. "How'd you get off for luncheon? I mean, for luncheon way uptown?"

"Just asked him," she said. She preceded him into the restaurant, sat down at a table, and ordered briskly.

"Something on my mind," she said, when the waiter had finally served them and departed.

"Shoot," said Tom.

"Maybe you've wondered why—well, why I haven't been able to tell you boys which one—"

"Maybe I have," assented Tom.

"I've wanted to be fair," she said. "You see—Tom, you're a doctor; you understand people. You know that—hang it, Tom, I don't see how I can tell you."

"You can tell your doctor anything. And you can tell your old friend *everything*," he said. "I'll understand."

"You won't understand this," she said. Her voice was suddenly harsh, bitter: "Tom—last summer—when you and Bill were on that Eastern cruise—well, there was a man. Never mind who it was. Suffice it that—well—do I need to say any more? That's why—well, I can't go to you—or to Bill—with that behind me."

Doctor Tom stared at her. His eyes seemed to probe her soul.

"You admitted I was a doctor, didn't you? Said I knew about people. Well, I do. Why, you little idiot, if God Himself told me that you—had done anything like that—I'd know He was doing it to test me. Ruth, you angel, don't lie to me. Will you marry me?"

"Tom, you old sweetie," she said through tears, "I'll let you know—soon."

BILL arrived punctually at five.

"How the dickens do you get off so early? Old Carey got a mash on you?" he demanded.

"Probably," she smiled. "Bill, you're a lawyer. You know people. I—want to tell you something."

"You can tell your lawyer all your crimes in perfect safety," he laughed. "And confident of perfect sympathy," he added, as he noted the gravity of her face. "What's on your mind?"

"You know—Bill, I want to be fair. You know what I think of you and Tom. A girl ought to have been able to make up her mind ever so long ago. I did. But—last summer—when you and Tom were away—well, there was a man—do I have to say any more?"

He eyed her gravely.

"No, young fellow, you don't. Not ever."

He rose from his chair, nodded as casually as though she were a man acquaintance, and started for the door.

"Bill," she cried, "where are you going?"

"I'm getting out of here—before I slap your face," he said.

"Before you— Bill!"

She was across the room, her hands clutching at him. And he struck her hands roughly from him.

"I suppose you think it's smart—doing a thing like this. Telling a stupid, melodramatic lie to see how I'd respond to it. I know what's in your mind—to try me out, find out if I react according to some copy-book maxim of chivalry. I suppose it's up to me to cry that I don't believe it—or that I do believe it, but don't care. I suppose I'm to think you so perfect that I'm to behave like a simpleton and pretend that no matter what you do or say I'm still unworthy of you."

She looked at her wrist where his hand had struck it.

"You hurt me, Bill; you hurt me," she almost whimpered.

"You ought to be hurt," he said. "What do you think you are—a goddess? You've been weighing Tom and myself for months—and the past night you decided, I suppose, to put us on the scales for a final weighing. You lunched with Tom today—his office told me so. And I guess you gave him the same story. Well, I don't know how he took it—I don't care. But I know how I'm taking it. I'm a man, understand? I'm not something for any girl—not even you—to analyze and test. You've known me years—if you don't know—by now—that I'm all right, then I don't want you to decide that I'm all right by some cheap little test. I suppose the idea was to find out, by our behavior, which one of us loved you more, eh?"

She nodded a miserable, shamefaced assent.

"Well, I don't want to be selected, even by you, because I care for you more than someone else does. I'd want to marry you because you cared more for me than you did for anyone else. I guess you've been spoiled by Tom and me. I guess you look upon yourself as a reward to one of us, instead of one of us being a reward to you. And I feel that if I'm crazy for some girl, she ought to be just as crazy for me. I'm giving as much as she is, and—oh, what's the use of talking to you? If you can't understand—I'm through."

But her hands caught at him again.

"Bill," she said, "Bill!"

THERE was that in her voice, in her eyes, which can only be called there by one thing, and that is the realization of love.

He stared at her; his eyes softened. He drew her to him.

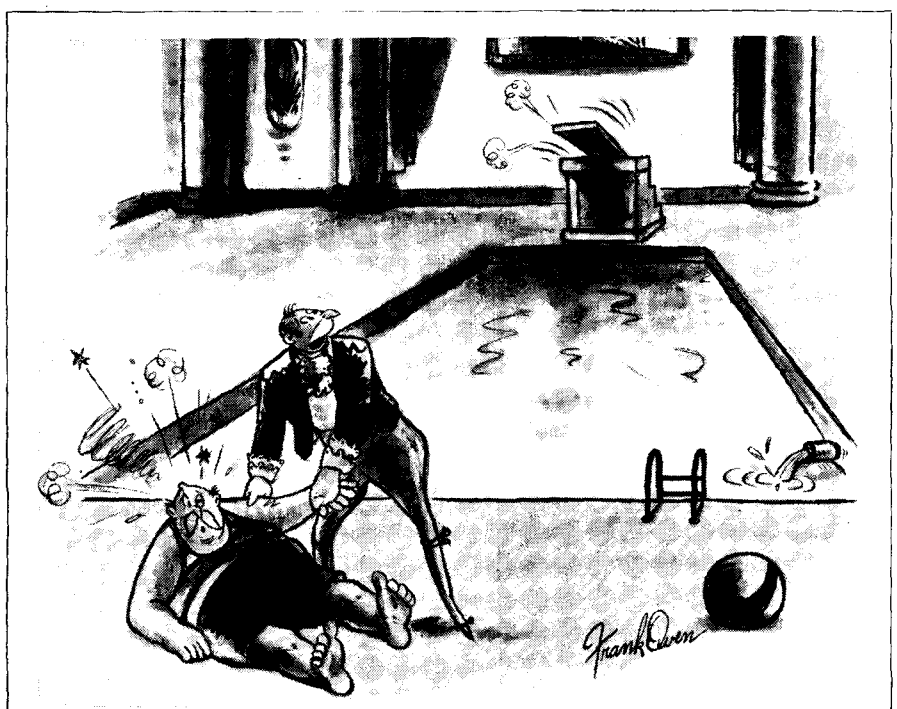
"Was I rough to you, young fellow? I'm sorry—I mean—I'm sorry I *had* to be rough."

"But you do love me, Bill?"

"Of course I do. Just because I can get angry, be hurt at something you do—doesn't mean I don't love you."

And she gave herself utterly to his embrace.

For heavier in the scales than Tom's belief and pride in her were Bill's belief and pride in himself.



"I believe that's it, sir—a little too much spring in that board!" *Frank Owen*

ACUMEN

The Sharpness of the Mind

A keen mind may be likened to a sharp knife, which penetrates easily and quickly. For clean-cut action, both the knife and the mind must be sharp. So it is natural that, when a word was needed to denote the faculty of keen, penetrating thought, the Latin word for "sharpness" should be borrowed. *Acuere,* in Latin, means "to sharpen" and *acumen* means "sharpness." English borrowed *acumen* and used it figuratively for sharpness of the mind. There are thousands of such stories about the origins of English words in

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Collier's

THOMAS H. BECK, *Editorial Director* WILLIAM L. CHENERY, *Editor* CHARLES COLEBAUGH, *Managing Editor*

The Tariff's Country Cousin

WHEN Theodore Roosevelt became President, American farmers were exporting some five hundred million bushels of grain a year. It was a profitable business.

Our population increased rapidly and there were more American mouths to feed during the years until the World War. The farmer sold more at home and he prospered moderately.

With the World War came the insatiable demand for more farm products. "Food will win the war" was the slogan. American farmers responded, stimulated by the highest prices they had ever known. Machines were bought. More land went under the plow. Agriculture boomed.

Then came peace and the post-war deflation. The great market which a fighting Europe had provided began to shrivel.

Australians and South Americans began to offer stiffer competition to American farmers. European nations began to raise their own food. By 1925 and 1926 our cereal exports were down to about 210,000,000 bushels. Surpluses mounted in size.

Meanwhile, the eating habits of the American people were changing. The average American now consumes 45 pounds less wheat annually than he did in 1900. This, too, affected the farmer.

Finally the Federal Farm Board was created. It wasted hundreds of millions in good tax money trying to peg the prices of wheat and cotton. The experiment was not a happy one.

Still the farmer must somehow be helped to retrieve his fortunes. We know now that all classes depend upon one another. The farmer can't be allowed to suffer if other classes are to prosper.

So at last we have a nation ready to undertake an experiment so new, important and far-reaching as the domestic allotment plan.

Never except in the dire emergencies of war have we undertaken so radical an adventure or proposed to entrust so much power to one man.

The domestic allotment plan will be tried because other schemes for raising the prices of farm products failed. Every important business or political group is agreed that higher farm prices are vitally necessary.

This agreement has been reached for intelligently selfish reasons. The farmers, of course, ought to have more money for their own sakes. Equally they need more money so that they may be better customers of those who sell in the farm market.

The scheme originated years ago in the mind of an employee of the Department of Agriculture. It is simply a subsidy for the farmer. The subsidy is to be paid on that part of his crops which is consumed in the United States. Only those farmers who decrease their acreage are to get the subsidies, and payments are first to be made only on a few basic crops.

There is little difference in principle between a domestic subsidy and a tariff. You collect tariff duties on imports and you may pay subsidies on home products. The purpose in each case is to improve conditions for American workers.

The tariff didn't help the farmer as it did the manufacturer because the farmer is an exporter. For many years we have cultivated sixty million acres which produced crops in excess of our needs. This sixty million acres was our export garden plot. World prices and not farm tariffs fixed American home prices because we produced more than we could use.

It has been impossible for the six million American farmers to agree on a reduction of planting and so to control their production. So the government, through the domestic allotment plan, is to pay those farmers who do reduce their crops.

All this is very sound and reasonable. The practical problem will be to keep politics out of the administration of the plan. The Secretary of Agriculture will be responsible for its execution and he will be intrusted with very great powers.

He will have to decide who is eligible for a subsidy and who isn't. He will have to fix the amount of the subsidy. Congress helps him there by offering him the chance to do some figuring. The farmer is to get a price roughly equivalent to what he got in 1914.

The money for the subsidy is to be collected as a tax when wheat, cotton, tobacco and hogs are sold to the processors, who are the millers, manufacturers and packers. Congressmen say the burden may not be passed on to the people. This is doubtless an expression of hope rather than of conviction.

However that may be, a large sum is to be collected, possibly a billion dollars. Out of this two and a half per cent is to be retained by the government so that the Secretary of Agriculture can hire men to administer the law.

The control which these new governmental agents will exercise over manufacturers and buyers, as well as over the farmers who apply for subsidies, will be something new in American history.

But we shall take the step. If not at this lame-duck session, then later in the year. Other schemes failed and nobody has any better alternative to offer. Besides, the scheme is definitely limited in time. In two years, unless renewed, it will expire.

The domestic allotment plan, moreover, has a good chance to work. Complicated and detailed as it is, the machine will operate if men of sufficient competence, character and courage are assembled and if the Secretary of Agriculture is strong enough to resist the political pressure which inevitably will be put upon him. In the hands of cheap politicians, such power would be calamitous.

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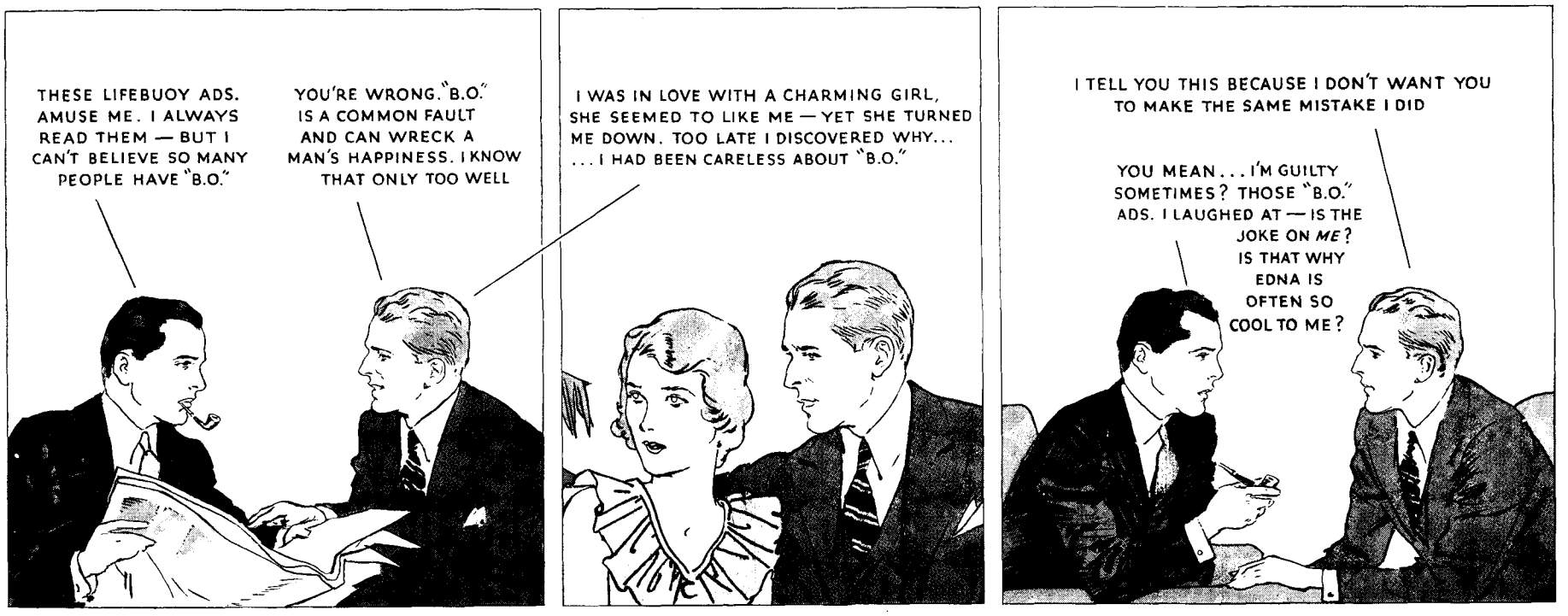
. . . BUT THE JOKE WAS ON *HIM!* . . . by Timmins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I WAS IN LOVE WITH A CHARMING GIRL, SHE SEEMED TO LIKE ME — YET SHE TURNED ME DOWN. TOO LATE I DISCOVERED WHY... ... I HAD BEEN CARELESS ABOUT "B.O."
I TELL YOU THIS BECAUSE I DON'T WANT YOU TO MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE I DID
YOU MEAN... I'M GUILTY SOMETIMES? THOSE "B.O." ADS. I LAUGHED AT — IS THE JOKE ON *ME*? IS THAT WHY EDNA IS OFTEN SO COOL TO ME?

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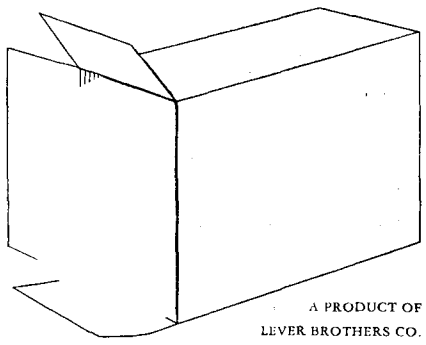

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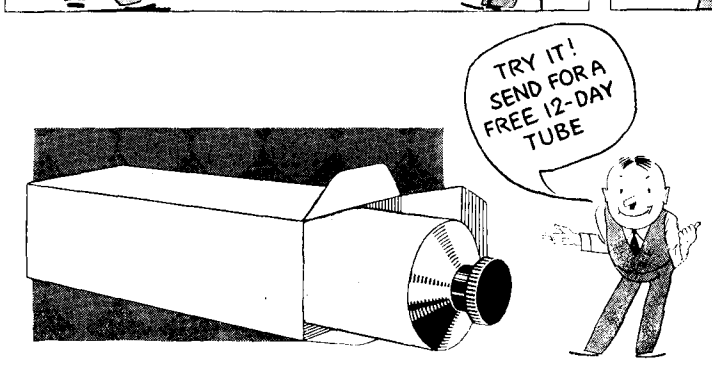

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